



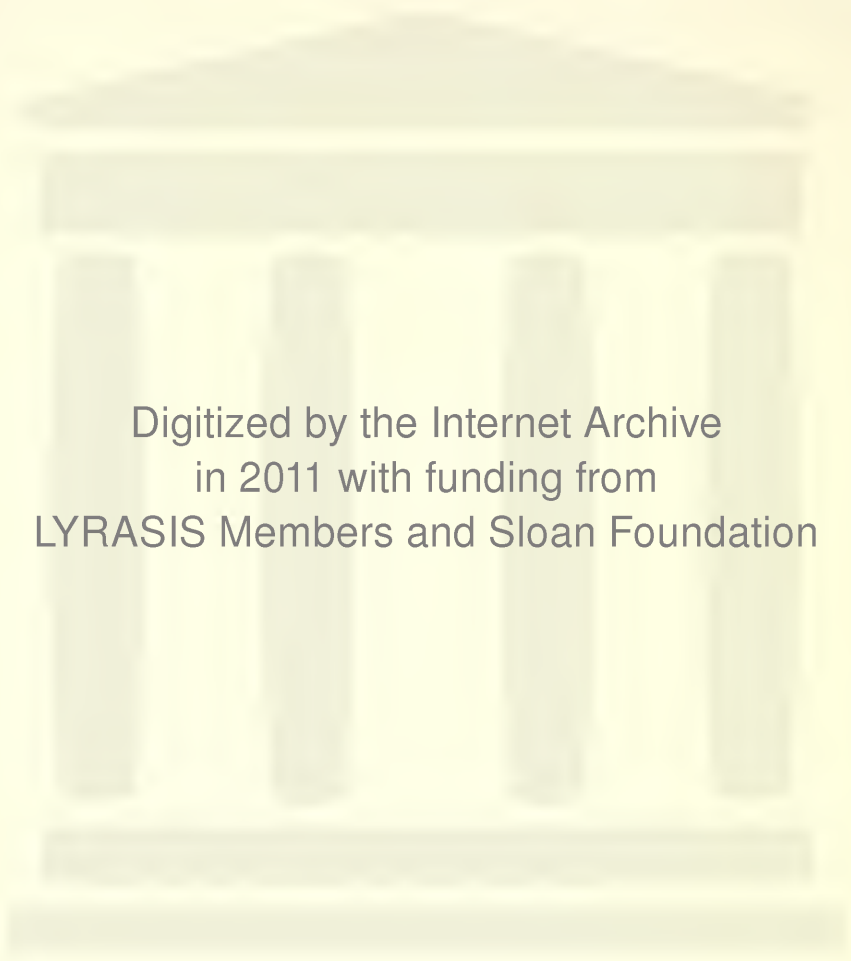
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THE AGE OF GRANDEUR





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# THE AGE OF GRANDEUR

## *Baroque Art and Architecture*

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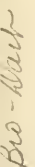


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## Introduction

THE *Age of Grandeur* first appeared in France in 1957 when it was published under the title *Baroque et Classicisme* by Librairie Plon in Paris. In the preface the author expressed the hope of doing something to dispel those prejudices which have made the great Baroque masterpieces incomprehensible to French taste. These prejudices most certainly did not exist in the seventeenth century, when Italian art enjoyed great prestige in France. But France, especially the cultivated circles of the capital, did not unreservedly submit to the Italian models. It sought for a personal idiom to express its manner of life and thought, and finally found it in Classicism.

But it is, nevertheless, unnecessary to oppose the Baroque and the classical styles as though they were two hostile worlds that had nothing in common with each other. Both forms of art derive from the Italian Renaissance. They spread through a Europe where the general economy, the political and religious thought and public feeling still maintained many characteristics in common. It is that that makes it sometimes difficult to trace the dividing line between the two aspects of the civilization of the same world and the same epoch. But from one country to the other society did differ; in one there might be a more marked aristocratic and rural pattern, while in another the middle classes were growing more numerous, powerful and active. It seems that in the former the imaginative style of Baroque was more warmly welcomed, while the latter favoured the harmonious classical style.

To understand why one or the other style was popular in certain regions and at certain times, it is essential to go back to the Italian Renaissance and then to trace the history of the various countries during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

But there is no question here of writing a complete history of Baroque and Classicism, nor of undertaking an exhaustive analysis of the buildings and monuments. Would such a work be possible or, indeed, even desirable? When one considers the present state of our knowledge, it would hardly be wise. One would have to make a census of works in each country and a thorough enquiry into the conditions prevailing at the time of their creation, before any synthesis could be attempted. So far there is not even a rough plan for such an enquiry, though one wishes there were,

with teams of investigators who could then compare their results. The design of this author cannot be on any such vast scale, but it is perhaps possible to attempt an essay dealing with some chosen examples which points out the relationship between the motifs we find in Baroque or classical works of art and the general conditions of the society which saw their birth and welcomed them. Encouragement from many readers has shown that this essay has aroused some interest.

The reader has every right to enquire how the examples have been chosen. The author's career has led him to many countries, but it never enabled him to enjoy a long stay in Spain and acquire a sufficiently deep knowledge of Spanish Baroque to dare put forward his own views. In a general history of Baroque to leave out Spain is to leave a yawning gap; this had to be done in this essay, of necessity and not without regret. Were it not that the method applied to the various countries that the author could choose had some value, this essay would not have been written. When the question of an English edition came to be discussed, it was proposed that a chapter on English Baroque should be included—a subject which is less wide ranging than Spanish Baroque, but which is now widely discussed and has aroused great interest. For in England one finally sees Baroque buildings and a Baroque outlook alongside the well-known Palladian and classical trends. Also the chapters on Central Europe have been revised and expanded for this translation, for it is there that we can see Baroque in a privileged position, which was due to the local conditions in these lands.

The English title has been chosen to stress one thing that was common both to Baroque and Classicism: the desire for magnificence. No doubt it was bound up with the plans of princes and politicians, but the nations as a whole accepted it as a proper expression of their own might. One can see that the great masterpieces of Baroque and Classicism coincide with times when the nations and their leaders had, or believed they had, reason to rejoice, to render thanks to Heaven, to make a deep impression on their contemporaries and construct something that would endure, to teach posterity about their victories. This we see in Rome in the Jubilee Year of 1600 and during the first half of the seventeenth century, when she was elated by the triumphs of the Counter-Reformation; in France, restored and glorious after the civil wars of the Fronde and the Spanish Treaty; and in Austria after the siege of Vienna, or in England, enjoying a new-found prosperity after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Moreover, the most humble classes also responded to these decorations and fantasies as though they might there find some solace for their crushing everyday burdens and, despite their worries, be transported into an ideal strange world.

This was the Age of Grandeur—grandeur that was loved, sought after, and, so everyone then thought, achieved. Succeeding generations, more anxious for concrete results, more realistic—or perhaps simply adopting different ideals—turned away from something that failed to satisfy them.





# BOOK I





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## CHAPTER I

9

# *The Birth of Baroque*

IF one wished to sum up the Renaissance in a word, there is a single name that seems to stand not only for all its wonderful achievements but also for the great hopes of the era, even if they came to nothing—Leonardo da Vinci. This man 'senza lettere', and we need not take this quip about his lack of letters seriously, is pre-eminently the heir to all the riches, spiritual and material, that had been accumulating in Italy since the thirteenth century, a master artist who could turn out a fresco or picture unequalled throughout the world; also an acute observer who sought to fathom natural laws and principles and so to harness Nature's forces for human ends. How much greater a humanist he was because of this than those over-subtle authors and learned commentators on Greek and Latin texts, giving, as he did, a new sense of beauty to his own and succeeding ages. The scientist in him was always impatient to find out secrets that could ease human labour by the use of machines or invent things that would even enable man to master the air or fathom the sea. It is he who shows most clearly how the Renaissance resolved many problems. When the Renaissance found an answer, it was a perfect one and has remained unchallenged to this day; when it asked questions, they were questions which were a challenge to every future generation including our own. We owe all our science and technical development to the Renaissance.

Leonardo da Vinci died in France in 1519. The next year Luther, by burning the Papal Bull at Wittenberg, started the revolt of those who could find no place for their faith or spiritual needs in the church as it then existed. The answer to this was the religious reform of the sixteenth century, on the one hand Protestant, where the solution differed from country to country and might be Calvinist, Lutheran, Anglican, or on the other hand Catholic, where the changes were summarized by the Council of Trent. In neither case was it a question of a new Christianity—the Protestants turned back to the original sources and the Catholics took up anew traditions that had fallen into abeyance—but it was a rejuvenated religion which understood and catered for new and contemporary needs and aspirations. The Renaissance and the Reformation coincided and were jointly responsible for changing the history of Europe and of the world. Nevertheless they were opposed to each other.

Sometimes people wonder if the year 1527, the year when Rome was sacked on Charles V's orders, was the date that changed the whole course of the Renaissance and marked the end of its most beautiful and characteristic period. No one would suggest that the Renaissance, with its almost all-embracing intellectual aspects, could just be swept away because Rome, even though it had fostered its most recent and expansive growth, had suffered a reverse. But there are some who think that the shock was so severe that the connexion with the past was irretrievably broken.

How then should we regard this vital date of 1527? A city which, like Florence, had become a centre of the arts and which for several years had witnessed the birth of masterpiece after masterpiece was overrun by a band of thirty-five thousand ruffians in serried ranks on Sunday, 5th May. Many of them were convinced Lutherans, or at any rate willing to be convinced that the weakly defended city, which had no chance against their weapons, was the modern Babylon, not the seat of Peter but the seat of every vice that menaced Christianity and the laws of God. But whatever the men or officers thought, any city that was pillaged by an army ran the risk of total destruction.

At this time Rome was still a badly laid out medieval city. Pigs wandered through streets piled with garbage. Here and there amidst the ancient ruins there might have arisen a new church or chantry. On the Vatican Hill St Peter's was still being built, and the Papal Palace was already stocked with masterpieces. The Sistine Chapel was there, with its ceiling by Michelangelo and its walls adorned by frescoes by the greatest artists from Tuscany and Umbria. A census gave the population as just under 54,000, though these were not all native Romans. There were people from various Italian provinces such as Lombardy and Tuscany, foreigners from Spain, Germany and France, and refugees from Greece who had crossed from the Dalmatian coast to Ancona and thence come on to Rome. There was also a small but active and important group of Jews. After the Sack of Rome contemporaries spoke of 40,000 dead and 13,600 houses destroyed, and though today such figures are not considered reliable, there is no doubt at all about the cataclysmic results. Large numbers of the inhabitants fled, including artists who for the most part were not Romans. The Campagna was depopulated and the value of land tumbled. The abandoned farm lands were invaded by marsh weeds that flourished and made an ideal breeding ground for malarial mosquitoes. Once again things seemed to have come full circle, and the peasants fled to the surrounding hills to build new villages round the castelli.

Three years after the Sack of Rome the horrors of war reached Florence, the second capital city of Renaissance Italy. Here the Republican government collapsed and power was again seized by the Medici. They were originally a banking family, distinguished for its wealth and patronage of the arts, now become sovereign princes and soon to acquire the hereditary title of Grand Duke. The King of Spain established his authority in



Milan and throughout the kingdom of Naples. It seemed indeed that nothing in the whole peninsula could be undertaken without the authority of the Spanish king or the autocratic and active viceroys whom he had installed, and many refer to this period as the Spanish Predominance in Italy. Although it would then appear that, historically speaking, one could say it was the end of one epoch and the beginning of another, it was in fact more a question of a shifting of the centre of power.

The city of Venice equalled Rome in beauty and was already rich in superb churches and great palaces, which were the more astonishing since they were built on its islands or along its canals. In the coming years Venice was to grow even more prosperous and benefit by the migrations, not of the ordinary refugee from the South of Italy, but by an influx of an élite of architects and painters who came to offer their services and who were promptly employed by the serene Republic. Outstanding amongst these was Sansovino, who worked on the Doge's Palace, built the Library, the Zecca and the Palazzo Corner on the Grand Canal [1]. After him came Palladio and Sanmicheli. Even Michelangelo, it is said, submitted a design for the Rialto. Then there were the painters Giorgione and Titian, who retained his creative powers into extreme old age and was nearing his centenary when he died in 1576. Add to them Paulo Veronese, who died in 1588, and Tintoretto who died in 1594, and one understands why the whole of the sixteenth century in Venice is artistically so magnificent, and is one of the greatest manifestations of the Italian Renaissance.

Neither Rome nor Florence remained crushed for long by their misfortunes. The sixteenth century, which had begun so gloriously, and had then been devastated by so terrible a storm, was soon to witness the development of a new prosperity in Italy.

In general this has been attributed to the major change in world economy brought about by the discovery of large deposits of precious metals in Spanish America. These found their way to European markets, and caused a rise in prices. The first countries to be affected were Spain and France, but it was not until the second half of the century that this tendency was felt throughout Italy, and not even then was the high level of prices uninterrupted; there were periods of deflation, when the markets became tight. By itself this tendency could not ensure prosperity nor alleviate the lot of the common people. Governments in particular gave an example of spending far in excess of their capital, and the two most powerful financial forces at the time—the privateers and the bankers—were apt to run into difficulties or become bankrupt. Fortunes changed hands, and the success or ruin of a patron involved all the tradesmen and artisans in his service.

But the fact remains that more money had brought higher prices, brisker business, and many blessings in its train. According to some it was not the primary cause. The Italian economist Cipolla recently suggested that this influx of money from the Americas only assured some equilibrium in the economy of the day. It encouraged a boom and either hindered or allevia-

6     ted a slump. But in Italy at least the main force behind the system was the need for reconstruction after the disasters of 1527 and 1530.

The restoration of damaged buildings and the construction and furnishing of new ones, whether religious, civic or private, affected every aspect of the national economy. It gave work alike to the labourer or the most famous artist, not to mention the carpenters, iron workers, furniture makers and locksmiths, all of them in turn dependent on the suppliers of foodstuffs and clothing. It is here that we must look for the cause of this incessant upward trend, which might be now and again retarded by some misfortune but which continued throughout the period.

In Rome, even on the morrow of the disaster, the Papacy was not discouraged. Six years later Michelangelo, who had himself suffered various bitter trials and quarrels during his stay in Florence and Venice, returned to the Eternal City and remained there until his death thirty years later. As for the pupils of Raphael, Giulio Romano had settled down in Mantua and was painting astonishing decorations for the Sala dei Giganti in the Palazzo del Té [2], but the Pope managed to recall Perino del Vaga from Genoa where he had taken refuge, and he resumed his work in the Vatican and at the Castel Sant' Angelo. Even Titian passed through Rome and left a picture of the Farnese pope surrounded by his grandchildren [3]. In his last Roman period Michelangelo, as architect, built the dome of St Peter's: as painter, composed the *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel: and as sculptor, executed the *Pieta* in the cathedral in Florence, in which the hooded Joseph of Arimathea, expressive of all the sorrow and pity that an old man can feel, dominates the group round the dead Christ.

If one contends that the Renaissance was finished in 1527 one must surely also maintain that these works, as well as those of the Venetian school, with Titian's *Assumption* in the Frari [4] and Tintoretto's *Crucifixion* in the Scuola San Rocco, do not belong to the Renaissance. Some may argue that the pessimistic outlook which these tragic years called forth was in such contrast to the triumphant joy and hope that had inspired man before, and led him to believe in a better future, that the whole spirit of the Renaissance had altered. Though the same artists still lived and used the same techniques, their vision had been so profoundly changed that one must speak, these critics say, of a new epoch. The former serenity, the calm joy that had been inspired by the belief that nature was intelligible and no longer a frightening mystery, had given place to a tortured emotional outlook.

+     This seems to be taking too narrow a view of the Renaissance. Romain Rolland, who had rare insight into the minds of the great artists, emphasizes that throughout his life Michelangelo was acutely aware of the power of sorrow,<sup>1</sup> and that it was indeed a token of his genius. In the slaves that were to decorate the tomb of Julius II he created 'immortal symbols of the weariness of living and the revolt against life'.<sup>2</sup> These statues were finished in 1516, and it is difficult to imagine that Michelangelo suddenly,





I Between 1526 and 1530, Correggio painted the frescoes of the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the cupola of Parma Cathedral. This detail shows the Virgin uplifted by putti



one day, imbued his art with a pathos to fit in with the theories of art historians of a later age.

In his native city, Florence, Michelangelo fought against some manifestations of the Florentine Renaissance. This can be seen by looking at the Old Sacristy of San Lorenzo and then at the New Sacristy. In the first, the decorations by Brunelleschi are of a restrained perfection, and follow the lines of the architecture so closely that the pleasure they afford is almost intellectual. In the New Sacristy, in niches carved out of the walls, the tombs are decorated by figures of Night and Day [5 & 6], Dawn and Evening. They fill one with a feeling of mystery and the sublime. Here passion, distress, contemplation and sorrow meet in a harmony which one would have thought impossible. Michelangelo certainly never breathed that serene air which surrounds the smiling Virgins of Raphael, nor did he achieve the intellectual calm of the Athenian school or understand the happy grace of da Vinci.<sup>3</sup> Because of this he is not outside the Renaissance, but rather to be praised for having dramatically infused it with a new and rich humanity. One must not overlook, either, the very complicated and numerous threads of influence which bound one artist to another. When Michelangelo chose to return to Rome under Paul III, his main task was to complete the building of St Peter's, and there his chief preoccupation was the crowning of the basilica with a dome, as Bramante had planned. He was, however, in favour of a more classical design, and turned back to Florence and to Brunelleschi. He asked for the plan of the cupola of Santa Maria degli Fiori to be sent him, hoping to enlarge and adapt it to the largest church in the world.<sup>4</sup>

Raphael expressed in all he did a sense of such perfect serenity that one might expect to find it echoed by his followers, but we are faced with Giulio Romano painting that tumultuous throng of giants at the Palazzo del Tè in Mantua. The story of the giants storming Olympus gave this powerful artist an excuse for depicting every frenzy and bestiality of which man is capable [2]. In the Stanze at the Vatican the punishment of Heliodorus unfolds with every intention of being dramatic, but the composition of the pictures is always preserved and the gestures are conventional in comparison with the irruption in the Palazzo del Tè. In Mantua, Giulio had not only found shelter from the general disasters that had overwhelmed the South of Italy, but also escaped a court sentence that might well have been imposed on him for his very erratic conduct. It seems as though his unbridled temperament, which had been checked in Rome, was now unleashed in the seat of the Gonzagas.

There is another Italian work of the same period which shows an innovation of very different character. If the visitor to Parma passes by the beautiful baptistry, where the marble has become honey-coloured with the passing of centuries, and enters the Romanesque porch of the cathedral and walks up the nave, he will see at the crossing of the transepts the astonishing fresco by Correggio which decorates the cupola [I & 7]. It was



- 8 painted during 1526 to 1530—those tragic years for Italy. Much as it behoves any writer on the Baroque to eschew the expression 'sacred dance', which comes so easily to hand to describe one frequent aspect of Baroque art, in this case it is too appropriate not to be used. At the base of the cupola the stone seems to melt into cloud, and there begins a rhythmical movement, really like a dance, which bears the angels up and ever up. With a bewildering fluttering of wings and graceful limbs the Virgin, half reclining, is borne aloft to rejoin her Son. In the centre of the cupola there is one solitary angel, clad in blue, who has outflown the rest. The whole scene has a luminosity which is hardly of this world, so heightened is its quality. This shows a profound difference from the art of Raphael. Correggio was a disciple of Mantegna and da Vinci and did not know the Romans. One recalls the story of how, when he first saw a work by Sanzio, he cried out, 'I too am a painter', recognizing that between the two of them there was an unbridgeable gulf of temperament and expression. It is not for us here to try to rate one above the other.

It is abundantly clear that the Renaissance was not only an expression of balance, or reason, or serenity, but a movement which embraced an immense variety of styles. Some people seem to fear that if some characteristics of Michelangelo or Correggio that later became common in Baroque are picked out, it is an attempt to rob the Renaissance of these great names in order to lend their prestige to a movement which otherwise could only boast of mediocrities.<sup>5</sup> But Baroque produced much more than mediocrities; these artists were true sons of the Renaissance and though they were emancipated children they were neither ungrateful nor untrue to their parentage. From the immense inheritance of inspiration and design that was left them, they chose what pleased them and freely adapted the works of their chosen masters to the needs of their own age.

The Renaissance was spiritually so rich that it gave an opportunity for the most diverse artists to express the whole gamut of human feeling. It could embrace passion, violence, anxiety, grace, and above all it could express the feeling of majestic harmony and serenity. So it had been before the crisis, and so it continued afterwards.<sup>6</sup>

It continued, and it also expanded, for Italian artists were in demand in many European countries to produce plans, to build, to decorate or to paint. France is a good example of this. The kings had brought back mainly decorators from the first invasions of Italy. The châteaux of the Loire, for instance, still kept the general outlines of medieval fortresses and all the Italians were asked to do was to embellish them, so that one could see what Italian decoration was like.

When Francis I returned from his imprisonment in Spain things took a different turn. More and more buildings showed an Italian influence, both in their general planning and the balance that was apparent between the various parts of the building. Chambord, though its history is still an

unsolved mystery, shows an unmistakable Italian influence which is not confined to decorative details, and the courtyard of the Château de la Rochefoucauld reminds one of the courtyards of palaces in Rome. Then, at the invitation of Francis I, three great Italian artists came to France. The first two were painters—Rosso who arrived in 1530 had spent three years (from 1524 to 1527) in Rome, followed in 1532 by il Primaticcio. Ten years later they were followed by Serlio, who was architect, builder and theorist. He was by then an old man, and he died in 1554, but his influence continued to be felt till the last third of the century. Nor were the three, Rosso, il Primaticcio and Serlio, merely advisers on artistic matters; they founded their own studios.

The great gallery at Fontainebleau, which was done by Rosso, is a work of remarkable originality [9]. Allegorical pictures which suggest the power and glory of the king are framed in stucco, which was at the time an Italian novelty [8]. Rosso had such perfect and elegant taste that even the very generous use of female forms, garlands of fruits and flowers, grotesques and sphinxes, putti and angels, or the figures of muses gracefully crossing or uncrossing their legs or the engaged columns with capitals in relief, have nothing heavy or gross about them. Occasionally a goddess may balance a basket or folds of strapwork on her head with an effortless gesture. The elongated figures and the way they are grouped round the frescoes and medallions recall the paintings of Parmigianino in the choir at Parma, and also the Mannerist phase of the Renaissance, when the artist claimed the right to interpret reality after his own fashion and used his ingenuity or fancy in arranging his lines and masses. As we shall see later, prints of these decorations at Fontainebleau became one of the sources of inspiration of French decorative art in the seventeenth century.

Serlio also was a bold and imaginative craftsman. In his *Rules of Architecture* he writes that it is 'a good thing for an architect to be abundant in ideas' (IV 135). He himself had a taste for the picturesque and liked using rustication. He was, however, a Roman who knew the antique and was also a connoisseur of the classical works of Bramante so that, as a teacher, he could preach the rules. He stressed the importance of sound construction; this was in contrast to the past, whose traditions he dismissed as barbarous and whose works he thought merely showy, for he was not aware that either skill or good sense might formerly have played a part in French art.

The middle of the sixteenth century in France saw the publication of a translation of Vitruvius and the treatise written by Alberti, *De Architectura*, as well as the works of Serlio himself, and though by present-day standards these books were not widely distributed they were available to builders and decorators.

Vignola was a great exponent of Vitruvius. Though, when he came to spend two years at Fontainebleau, he had not yet published his *Rules of the Five Orders of Architecture*, later to become so well known to French archi-

10 tects, yet he had already formulated all his ideas and expounded them to all who came in touch with him.

Even the Italian Renaissance was rivalled by the French School which, under the inspiration of Classicism, suddenly flowered, and produced such artists as Pierre Lescot, Jean Goujon, Philibert de l'Orme, Bullant and Pierre Bontemps. Their technique was faultless, what they did was done with decency and grace, and they are best represented by the façade of the Louvre, or the Fontaine des Innocents. Then, after Francis I, Italianate trends were superseded by a classical Renaissance movement. Paris overshadowed Fontainebleau. One might almost say that France was throwing off the Italian yoke and perhaps it is significant that in these years, or to be precise in 1549, Du Ballay published his *Défense et illustration de la langue française*. The French genius, after its tutelage under the Italians, wished to go direct to the original classical sources.

This French Renaissance produced many works of great quality which inspired future generations and remained the models and greatest examples of this style, but it neither engaged all the talent then available in France nor fulfilled all her needs. The very lack of communication and the distance between the towns ensured the survival of medieval traditions which were in any case still popular, and today the important and useful role they played can be appreciated.

The sixteenth century is indeed more medieval than modern and one must picture France, at that date, as remaining a peasant country where most people lived much the same life as in the preceding century. There had been little social or economic change; the people were still represented by their guilds, and thinking much the same thoughts as their fathers had done before them. Towns affected by the expansion of trade and new wealth to such a degree that it changed day to day life or led to any rebuilding were few in number. And thus it was amongst the artisans or tradesmen that there grew up an interest in reformed religion and a taste for whatever was then considered modern. Court circles, the élite of the great nobles, and the leading figures in the church or banking or commerce—all those, in short, belonging to the privileged classes—formed a bloc which was opposed to the masses still living for the most part in misery or in very moderate circumstances, though it is true that in some categories the standard of living had improved. Under such conditions it is not surprising that the old forms and traditions were held on to stubbornly.

France, even when the Renaissance movement had become widespread, remained in many ways Gothic. The Flamboyant style and the Italian were found side by side, sometimes in contrast and sometimes in combination with each other. But only an artist of strong convictions was likely to adhere strictly to either school. The sculptors and masons who were susceptible to rival influences gradually achieved a conglomerate style by imitating or borrowing this or that motif.



In this, France was not exceptional, for the same thing happened in Germany and the Netherlands. There again Gothic and Renaissance come face to face and you see elaborate pinnacles or pointed arches side by side with pilasters decorated with arabesques, or a gabled building with mullion or Italianate windows. In Flanders, Burgundy and around Nuremberg the rather heavy and comfortable German manner still maintained its attraction after the introduction of the Italian style.

Turning to the Iberian peninsula, the famous window at Thomar [II] or the marvellous cloisters of Belem reflect the extraordinary colonial phase of Portuguese history and are carried out in a flamboyant style which seems capable of embracing the whole vegetable kingdom, most navigational instruments, birds, and exotic or Moorish figures. This extraordinary and overflowing opulence is, in spirit, quite medieval. In Spain there is the Plateresque, with its mixture of Gothic, Moslem and Italian influences, but it was in no way a precursor or herald of the Baroque.

Where medieval art had flourished a more sophisticated movement grew up inspired by the Roman Renaissance which Charles V had implanted at the Alhambra (e.g. the rotunda of Pedro Machuca), and later on, when the Escorial was built by Herrera, we get a style majestic, regular, rigorous, possessing a unique and austere grandeur. It belonged to the golden century for Spain, under the reign of Philip II. It had perhaps something in common with the birth of the French Renaissance style under Henri II. In both instances it was a case of the classical with its deep feeling for pure line (whether expressed in the heavy manner of Spain or in the more refined French style) refusing to indulge in the exuberance of the flamboyant style. Yet in spite of their own intrinsic qualities and in spite of the influence they had from being favoured by royalty, these buildings stand rather apart, isolated from the still fertile and virile Gothic tradition.

The Renaissance continued and showed its capacity to assimilate many things, but there was also much that it failed to absorb and traditional links with the older styles cropped up even though they would seem to have been less adapted to an age which was seeking new values.

We must now face the one essential factor in European history of the sixteenth century, which was the religious crisis. The necessity for some spiritual reform in Christianity was too urgent not to be universally recognized. Ecclesiastics were talking of reforming the Church root and branch. Such a task could only be undertaken by a Council, for its authority and right to give a lead to the church had been established after the momentous meetings of the bishops in Geneva and in Basle. One thing, however, was left in the air, and that was the respective rights of the Pope and the Council. Reform on such a scale called for decisions which were too great for any Pope to make by himself, but, if they were to carry any prestige, it was essential that the Pope authorized them. Nothing had been

- 12 decided when suddenly Luther rebelled against those teachings of Rome which he found contrary to St Paul and the Evangelists, and against 'Works'—the liturgy, the cult of saints, and the hierarchy which seemed to have triumphed over faith.

Everything was thrown into disorder: the daring theses (though they were not much more daring than many others that had been published in the past), their condemnation by Rome and the burning of the Papal Bull at Wittenberg followed each other with great speed. Christianity, just as it was hoping to gain new strength, was faced with a new schism. Schism it had faced often enough before, but this was something more serious. It was indeed the birth of modern Europe. However difficult it is to sketch briefly this profound crisis, where so many different influences were at work, it is at least clear that it was a religious question, the question of salvation, that was dominant and is the key to everything else. Salvation by faith was agreed on by everyone. But what part did works play? Certainly redemption was through the sacrifice on the Cross, and its repetition in the Eucharist—but how should one interpret the Eucharist? Was it necessary to believe in transubstantiation or was it possible to retain an open mind on this? It was unanimously agreed that original sin had infected all, and could only be washed away by baptism. Baptism and Holy Communion were essential sacraments, but must one also include confirmation, marriage, extreme unction, penance (and what form of penance?) or obedience as essential sacraments? Was there, taking into account what the ancient authorities had deemed sacramental, a fixed number of sacraments? Then, if the cult of saints, and especially the cult of the Blessed Virgin, were encouraged, was there not a risk that these personal cults might not detract from the supreme homage we owe to the Creator? Another question arose about the Church as teacher—could it claim any source of inspiration except Holy Script, or did the Fathers of the Church, the Councils, and the Pronouncements of the Popes also carry authority? Then, while these doctrinal and moral problems were being debated, questions were raised about the duties of bishops and priests toward the faithful; how frequently, for instance, should a believer be obliged to partake of the Holy Sacrament?

These wearisome debates went on for eighteen years, though there were interminable interruptions and such long gaps that it seemed as though the Council would be faced with a stalemate and never resume its deliberations. But the Catholic church managed to extract something from them; it could hardly be called a new doctrine, and even less a comprehensive doctrine, for many points were left in suspense, to be clarified at a later date (some still await an answer today), but it did form a collection of definitions which were more precise than in the past. They were also more imperious: any opposition to them was anathema. Finally a whole body of dogmas and principles was established, which made it clear that most of the tenets held by the Lutherans and Calvinists were heretical.

This applied more to the Calvinists whose doctrine was harsher and more intransigent than that of the Lutherans who had, even as the Council was sitting, elaborated and reaffirmed them.

One refers to the Counter-Reformation, which is a not very appropriate term invented by historians. It was rather a Catholic Reformation, and one fraught with many consequences. There were to be seven sacraments by which the faithful might partake of the grace of God. Most of these enhanced the power of the clergy, for only they could bless the elements of the Holy Sacrament, give remission of sins, or, if of the requisite rank, ordain. Bishops were supposed to take up residence in their dioceses, instruct the people in doctrine and see that the liturgy was read in a decent and, if possible, in an imposing manner. They were also charged to recruit catechumens and see that they were suitably instructed in the seminaries. The parish priest desired a new dignity from the sacraments which he alone could administer. The monastic orders were reformed and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, with its house restored to order, could oppose its own point of view to the Protestant conception of a sacerdotalism common to the whole Christian community. Transubstantiation had at last been recognized and defined. It was no longer a matter of the congregation partaking of the sacrament; the worship of the host was now justified, and the Real Presence might be revered when a host was exposed on an altar or carried in a procession.

The cult of Saints, and even more markedly the cult of the Blessed Virgin, was allowed and encouraged, though the faithful were to be carefully instructed about the intercession of saints, their invocation, and the respect which should be paid to their relics, as well as the lawful use of saintly images. But, while justifying and encouraging this cult of images, the Council prohibited anything to be placed in a church that might encourage false opinions or superstitions that were contrary to the orthodox faith. The whole religious iconography was, in short, taking on a new shape.

Religion was making a new appeal. Primarily it was based upon a combination of mysticism and discipline, but now everyday things acquired a new spiritual and sacramental significance. Apart from the cult of saintly images there were rosaries, and other sacred objects such as the branches distributed on Palm Sunday, or holy water, bread and candles that had been blessed, or harvests and houses for which one had sought divine protection. Catholic religion became, in many ways, tangible and it was precisely against this that the Protestant Reformation as a whole protested, holding such things to be sacrilegious and idolatrous. It was for them to shield God and Christ from all these contaminations and profanations.

The Council had, however, come to no hard and fast conclusions, and in the bustle and scurry which characterized their last meetings many questions were left unanswered. Many of the Fathers felt that, without any sacrifice of principle, some concessions might be made to reconcile the



Church and the Lutherans, who had no desire at all to become heretics. Throughout the Empire the partaking of the Holy Sacrament by bread or by wine was canvassed with such fervour that the efficacy of the one or the other element hardly came into question. Nor did the Council condemn either view. It affirmed that Christ, as God and Man, was present in each; that anyone denying or doubting this was anathema. By even preferring that the faithful should be content by the sacrament of bread alone, they made enemies of and alienated all those who demanded the chalice. The Virgin Mary was accorded a status more glorious than any other being, but it was not decided if it was necessary to believe that she had been spared original sin—the Immaculate Conception—or had bodily, like Christ, ascended into heaven.

Only the Pope, Bishop of Rome and First of the Bishops, had enough authority to decide on these questions, but though the matters were referred to him there was no implication that his judgment would be infallible, superior or more authoritative than the decisions of the Council. At this date it was also not clear to what extent the Pope, as a religious leader, should be allowed to interfere in affairs which a nation considered secular, or how far a sovereign might legislate in things that could affect religion.

Bishops from all over Christendom flocked to the Council. But no German bishop who had gone over to the Reformation came, or sought reconciliation. The English king Henry VIII, who had so thundered against Lutheranism that he had become Defender of the Faith, had quarrelled with the Pope and broken with Rome even before the Council met. When it finished England was still, in spite of the five years of Catholicism under Mary Tudor, estranged, and the Anglican Church had entered into communion with the Protestants in Scandinavia.

It also seemed probable that other nations might, for nationalistic or political reasons, break away. At certain times Charles V (as Emperor and King of Spain) and Henri II of France were both at loggerheads with the Council. It was mainly due to the German bishops and in some sessions also, surprisingly enough, to the French that new breaches were avoided. More important than this, together they helped to bring about the resurgence of a church that had renewed its faith and was again solidly attached to its Supreme Head. Yet the result was that Europe still remained split in two, and the religious map had to be drawn again.

At first sight it looks as though northern Europe was opposed to Mediterranean Europe, but it was not so simple as that, for both Flanders and Poland remained faithful to the Roman Church, and the feeling that they were encircled by heretics made their adherence fanatical. But there can be no doubt at all that the Council, which had been mainly the work of the Italian, Spanish and French clergy, did define a church that in many respects was best suited to Latin countries. It is worth noting also that just when Italy of the Renaissance was producing masterpieces of



I The Library, Venice, by Sansovino: 'A complex design on the grand scale, with two porticos, the lower one Doric, the upper Ionic, embellished with festoons and a multiplicity of ornaments.' (A. Chastel, *L'Art Italien*, p. 42)







3

Titian's portrait of *Pope Paul III and his Grandsons* is one of the finest in existence and one of the painter's greatest works. The Pope's indomitable energy gives renewed vigour and life to a body ravaged with age

LEFT. In his frescoes for the Hall of Giants at the Palazzo del Tè, Giulio Romano drew on mythological themes to reveal, through the features of the giants besieging Olympus, all the madness and bestiality that can break out in man





In Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*: 'The Virgin soars Heavenward, not helpless in the arms of angels, but borne up by the fullness of life within her, and by the feeling that nothing can check her course.' (Bernard Berenson, *The Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, p. 19)



Statues of Night (ABOVE) and Day, by Michelangelo, in a composition which flouts all the laws of balance, give rise to feelings of detachment and of profound grief, and are sublime for that very reason







- 7 The stone at the base of the cupola in Correggio's *Assumption of The Virgin* in Parma Cathedral seems to be transformed into cloud and the angels carrying the semi-recumbent Virgin are uplifted in a rhythmic movement, as in a dance





8



9

The Francis I Gallery at Fontainebleau (BELOW), decorated in stucco, an Italian innovation, framing the frescoes (ABOVE). The mythological subjects symbolically celebrate the power and grandeur of the King





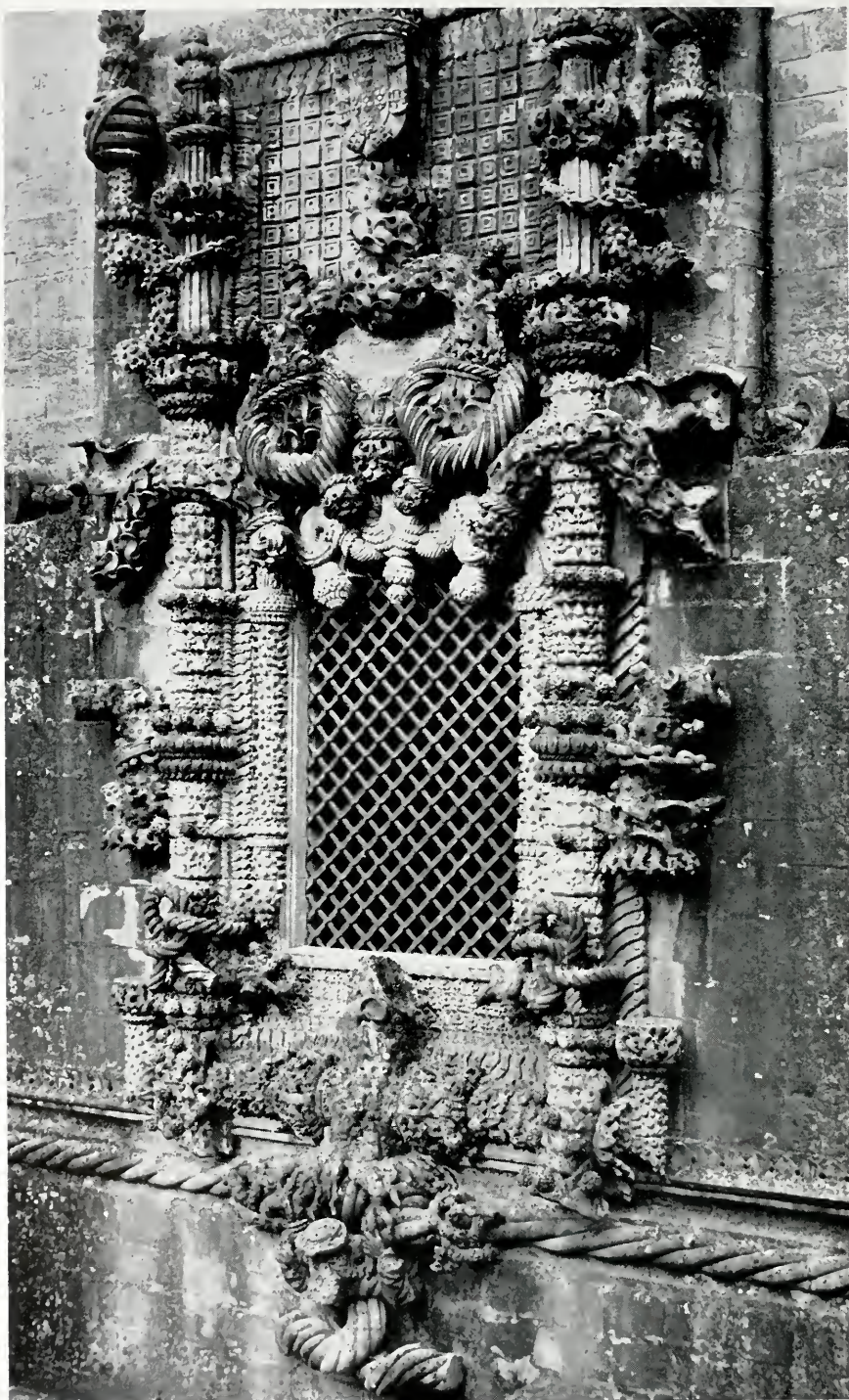
10 The mural of the Grand Council Chamber in the Doge's Palace was painted by Tintoretto between 1587 and 1890. It is believed to be the largest picture in the





world. Nearly five hundred figures are grouped round the Virgin and Christ in a dazzling assembly





The Spanish critic, Eugenio d'Ors, discovered the essential features of Baroque—emphasis on the picturesque, a profound sense of movement and a propensity for the theatrical and lavish—in the window of the Chapter House of Thomar





The Benediction Loggia at St John Lateran is by Fontana, who worked on the rebuilding of Rome under Sixtus V. This building, with its two orders, doric and corinthian, has a monumental but rather cold elegance



13 A return to the characteristic features of a triumphal arch and the tradition of Santa Maria Novella achieves a majestic, symmetrical and austere effect in the façade of the church of the Gesù by Giacomo della Porta





14 The interior of the Gesù is Vignola's masterpiece, with its side chapels, the opening of the dome over the transept, and the shallow apse. It adapts the tradition of the basilica to new needs





15 LEFT. Santa Susanna, built by Maderna in 1603, is the first façade to herald the Baroque. RIGHT. The façade of Sant Andrea della Valle, by Rainaldi, is one of the most beautiful Baroque churches in Rome



LEFT. In Santa Maria della Vittoria, Soria's reversion to simplicity shows a predilection for the archaic. RIGHT. SS Vincenzo e Anastasio, by Lunghi the Younger, has vertically grouped, organ-like columns







The façade of SS Luca e Martina, built by Pietro da Cortona in 1634, is expansive in character and introduces a new quality to Baroque architecture





20 The façade of Santa Maria in Via Lata, by Pietro da Cortona, has a two-storeyed porch consisting of two galleries of columns, one above the other

sculpture and painting in such abundance, there was no talk of condemning the cult of images. Another point that is no less remarkable is the role played by a new order founded in 1540 by the Spaniard Ignatius Loyola, which originally only recruited its members in Spain or Italy. Yet it was the Jesuits who throughout the meetings of the Council took the lead, suggesting innovations or clarifying definitions, and it was they who really left their mark, and a very Latin mark it was, upon the whole undertaking. The church that was born of the Council's labours was nevertheless only a concept. It has recognized what principles and basic qualities it stood for, and how to propagate them, but it still remained to translate ideals into realities, and this was an immense task which the Fathers realized would entail bitter struggles and engage all the energies of many succeeding generations. Thus the '60's of the century saw the beginning of a new enterprise, which was to regenerate the clergy in every land, and fight heresy, which showed no signs of dying after being condemned by the Council of Trent. It seemed, rather, to take on a new lease of life.

In 1563 the Council rose and the Wars of Religion in France reached their climax. It would be a great mistake to think that Protestantism was checked by any decisions reached at Trent. It had never been more vigorous, nor appealed more strongly to the conscience of mankind. For the space of forty or fifty years the battle went on and no one knew what the outcome would be. It would equally be a mistake to think that the Edict of Nantes put an end to the religious wars, for how but as a religious war can one explain the sudden attack on Russia at the beginning of the seventeenth century by Poland and Sweden? The Russia of Boris Godonov was weak, famine-stricken, and an easy prey for her neighbours; but there are many signs that it was looked upon as a religious undertaking and both Catholic Poland and Lutheran Sweden combined to attack a schismatic and idolatrous country given over to the worship of icons. And, thirteen years later, the war which broke out after the Defenestration of Prague was, to begin with, a religious war, though, taking the Thirty Years' War as a whole, political influences became paramount.

The new spirit of Catholicism was no longer content to leave communities of the faithful more or less self-contained. It wished to weld them together under one discipline, to teach a standardized doctrine, and inspire them by the same devotions. This was something new in Europe. It is useless to look for any definite date or particular event to mark the end of the Renaissance, but after the Trentine Council new tendencies appear in Europe which would have been quite alien to Renaissance feeling.

Rome underwent great changes. The Popes were determined to give her a dignity which would be worthy of 'a country common to all Christian peoples', as Pius V said in 1565, or, as Sixtus V described it, 'the home of the Christian religion'. If it were to become this and attract the faithful from all lands it was obviously essential that it should be both accessible



and beautiful. Pilgrims who came to make the round of the five great basilicas must be able to proceed from one to the other by well-paved and direct roads, and cross the Tiber by new and safe bridges. To quote Sixtus V again, 'Rome does not only need divine protection and sacred and spiritual power, but also beauty which ensures convenience and worldly ornamentation.'

This preoccupation with town-planning, to use a modern term, was not peculiar to the Popes of the Counter-Reformation, but had already engaged their predecessors of the Renaissance. Julius II, on the advice of Bramante, had driven a long straight road, the Via Giulia, down the left bank of the Tiber to carry traffic from the Ponte Sisto to another projected bridge that was never built. An ambitious programme, which was perpetually being changed and enlarged as Pope succeeded Pope, was mainly carried out in the second half of the sixteenth century. It was then that the Corso linking the Porto del Popolo with the Palazzo San Marco was laid out, as well as the avenues which radiate from the Piazza del Popolo, leading to the river and to the Trinità dei Monti, and the road which runs from the Trinità dei Monti down to the Tiber.

The Borgo was remodelled and both the Vatican and Quirinal were built. Fountains were constructed to supply water to all parts of Rome. The work on St Peter's went on, but now Vignola and Giacomo della Porta were following up the work of Michelangelo.

Of all the 'building Popes' Sixtus V, though he was Pontiff for only five years, stands out as the most enterprising and the one most inspired by Tridentine feeling. His particular devotion to the Virgin led him to plan Santa Maria Maggiore as the centre of a new town which would stretch to the hills and link up with the city at the Campo Marzio. He involved his architect, Domenico Fontana, in the most surprising and daring undertakings of shifting ancient obelisks and re-erecting them magnificently in the centre of a piazza. By placing a cross on top of an obelisk, and using these treasures of the antique world merely as pedestals for the symbol of Christianity, he expressed the defeat of paganism by the new faith, and in the same way statues of Peter and Paul were used to crown the Trajan and Antonine columns.

Everywhere churches were being built. Rome had already become superb, and pilgrims discovered to their delight that it was the most lovely city in Europe. Its population had doubled since the time of Clement VII. Every cardinal who had a titular church in Rome had to rebuild or restore it. New orders—Oratorians, Jesuits, Dominicans, Augustines and Carmelites—the various guilds, the foreign colonies in Rome (e.g. the Lombards, Spaniards, Germans or French) and pious individuals all competed with each other to such an extent that, quite apart from St Peter's, no less than fifty-three churches or chapels were built or restored during the century.<sup>7</sup>

It was then that Rome acquired those characteristics that stamp it still

today. It became that extraordinary city of religion where the churches, far too many for religious needs, are crowded together so thickly that one is tempted to call them unnecessary and superfluous. They look like temporary altars that have somehow taken root along the path of a procession. But in its general planning, with broad streets linking up the Campo Marzio, the Capitol and the seven hills, Papal Rome of the Counter-Reformation displayed the most advanced layout to be found anywhere in Europe. The town planners of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had little to contribute that was not inspired by plans which had been drawn up if not carried out by the Popes.

It is difficult to describe exactly the aesthetic behind this robustly logical, geometrical arrangement of the city, with the long vistas leading to an obelisk or church façade. Was it not perhaps more Renaissance in feeling, in the tradition of Alberti and Bramante, than in harmony with the seventeenth century, which was turning away from their principles to develop quite a different style? In any case, though the town planning of Rome which had been encouraged by the Council may have prolonged the Renaissance here, in other fields it was obvious that there was a conflict of styles. The pagan models and the beauty of form which had appealed so strongly to the Renaissance mind appeared detestable to a church which considered itself more Christian, and condemned both sensuous and imaginative pleasures. The austere Pius V was so shocked by the *Last Judgment* that the nude figures which Michelangelo had seen as serene or tragic rather than sensual were decently overpainted with modest bits of clothing. It was he too who was responsible for those surprising fig leaves which have ever since sullied the antique statues in the Vatican Museum.

The spirit of the Counter-Reformation, as it broke away from the Renaissance, had certainly nothing in common with the ostentation, audacity and richness of imagination which were soon to become the hallmark of the Baroque. Baroque was expansive, generous and audacious: this was timid, arid and cramped. But there is no doubt that this religious revolution, that had split Europe in two and added a Western schism to the one already dividing Rome from the Orthodox Church, was responsible for the new values and opinions in countries that still remained Catholic.

There are other new values that we must take into account. Historians are divided in their approach towards the political events in the second half of the sixteenth century. One used to talk in terms of Spanish supremacy.<sup>8</sup> Charles V, who abdicated in 1556, may not have been able to resurrect that dream of the Middle Ages or the Age of Chivalry in which all Europe was under one Emperor or owed him allegiance—a dream which, incidentally, inspired the stained glass in St Gudule at Brussels, where the Emperor kneels in prayer surrounded by all his family, each one a king

18 or prince of a great country. But Philip II did at least extend his rule far outside Spain, to Flanders, Portugal, Naples and Milan, and it was touch and go whether he would add France to his Empire. In 1571, in concert with Venice, his arms and his fleet had won the resounding victory of Lepanto and delivered all Christendom from the threat of Islam. Without detracting from the glory of Lepanto, it was a victory that led nowhere.

Today a new interpretation is put forward. The main factor in the economic and social history of the times is the fate of the Mediterranean. It was not due to the inevitable decline caused by the great traffic routes moving north and basing themselves on Atlantic ports so much as to the ideological battle waged by this region 'closely knit, cultured and thoroughbred . . . against giant adversaries'.<sup>9</sup> Throughout the Mediterranean economic strength was still assured by the maritime cities: Valencia, Genoa, Venice with its satellites, and Constantinople, or by the commercial centres such as Milan, Nuremberg, or Lyons through which accounts could be cleared, foreign exchange bought, and goods forwarded. Europe exported cloth, linen and iron and received oriental spices, silks and precious metals in exchange. Territorial states, which had superseded a dilapidated feudalism, took the lead from the towns and were prepared to launch forth armies to defend their interests or to conquer.

In Western Europe, England, Spain and France, all of them bound geographically to an interest in the new Atlantic undertakings, became monarchies as centralized as the times allowed, though centralization was hindered both by slow and bad communications, and a strong provincial feeling for traditional rights. It was, nevertheless, these three States that counted. Even then the monarchies were growing at the expense of the towns and of the middle classes, which had less and less to say, and became swallowed up by the State. Such a change was bound to have many different consequences. One was the way the middle classes invested their capital. They bought either land or office, for the State found that the sale of public office was a better source of revenue than taxation. This hunger for land or, even more, for a governmental concession became a major phenomenon in European society from the Age of Discovery, when capital was used largely to expand trade throughout the world, to the Machine Age, that only began in the eighteenth century and then took an unbelievable time to merge into industrialization and the consequent growth of the towns.

In the meantime, landed property was at a premium from Spain to Russia (which in justice should be considered as part of Europe and not relegated to Asia). One can detect this trend far more easily than explain the fundamental reasons behind it. Land was put up for sale because often the feudal rents, paid in silver, no longer provided sufficient income for the landlord, or because the new widespread habit of luxurious living led many of the leading families to live beyond their income. They scarcely knew what dangers they were running into. They fell into debt and when



at last the bill was presented there was nothing to do but sell out their hereditary estates.

In Russia the case was slightly different. The Emperors, from Ivan the Terrible to Peter the Great, suffered from a lack of ready money; therefore ministers or marshals were given temporary territorial rights in lieu of salaries, and were expected to live upon the revenues. Certainly landed property did not always remain entailed, and when land was for sale it was snapped up immediately, for anyone with capital wished to invest it in land. This may have been due to the land hunger which was a characteristic of the peasantry who had for centuries been the backbone of all European countries. It might, on the other hand, be caused by the petty outlook of people who could not realize the opportunities of commerce that had been opened up by the new sea and overland routes or created by the new banks—though these, it is true, tended to enrich only a few individuals. There are two more weighty factors that came into play: one purely selfish, and one which combined self-interest with a certain amount of idealism.

One can understand tradesmen and business men being attracted to buy land for purely mercenary reasons, for, although the primitive methods of tilling the soil meant that the farm labourer led a miserable and penurious life, the landowner could get a great deal out of it. In the first place it was a stable investment which, even if it did not bring in much, was at least free from those catastrophic disasters which might from one day to the next overwhelm a bank or a trading concern. The landlords who were faced with ruin and wished to sell their estates had, for the most part, landed themselves in trouble not because their estates could not be made to pay, but for other reasons. Those who bought the estates were convinced that they would not be so stupid or so unfortunate as the previous owners.

When we consider other motives that might compete with pure greed we must remember the prestige conferred by becoming a land owner. There were some aristocratic estates that were exempt from taxation altogether. Both these and the estates held by commoners (between them they comprised nearly all the manors) allowed the landlord to collect various feudal dues, paid either in money or in kind. One could be certain of magisterial and market fees, toll charges, right of escheat, or the sale of monopolies, all of which remained a steady source of income even when money in every country had become unstable. But probably the fact that to own land made one a petty local king was most important of all. To dismiss this as mere vanity is to echo a judgment reached by a later generation living in a quite different form of society. It was not so simple as that. Manorial rights might bring present satisfaction but they were also looked on as a guarantee for the future. Here it is worth quoting Colbert, who is justly renowned for his plans for expanding commerce and industry. It was he who said that in buying land one thinks of a family possession which is not ephemeral but will last and be inherited by generations of

20 descendants. Above vanity or wish of gain there is almost a combination of religious and family feeling about land.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries one can see throughout Europe this tendency—the impoverished aristocracy selling land and the *nouveaux riches* buying it; the only thing that remained unaltered was the prestige still enjoyed by the landowners. Everywhere the old families were giving place to new. In the Papal states the Savelli, who had for many generations been barons, sold their demesnes to the parvenus Chigi, and sons of bankers, like the Ruspoli, Serlupi or the Ceuli took over ancient estates. In France, foreign merchants such as the Ruiz, who had a counting-house in Nantes, obtained their naturalization locally and bought territory nearby in Haute-Goulaine.<sup>10</sup> One can look at it from various angles. Some contemporary Czech historians have dubbed it ‘the second servitude’, referring to the fate of the peasants who had risen to manorial rank. M. Braudel on the other hand sees the respect that came from owning land as being one with aristocratic presumption.

To own land and be lord of a manor was social advancement. ‘No land without gentry’ might be a doubtful proposition; but no one doubted that ‘No land, no gentleman’ was true. As long as public opinion accepted and approved the dues and still more the honours paid to the owners of land (honours unknown by the bourgeoisie), one cannot be surprised that the general tendency was to create a new peerage if an ancient family became extinct or was ruined. The nobility and gentry must be retained.

It was however a nobility that was on more of a manorial than a feudal pattern. The old military and financial dues which a vassal paid his suzerain had by no means disappeared, but to emphasize them unduly would be distorting the picture. The rights and the rents to which a seigneur or lord of the manor was entitled formed an entity and, theoretically, one could possess these even if one did not own a square foot of land, though in nearly every case the land and the rights were held by the same person. An estate might be managed by the owner himself, or farmed out to some merchant who, in his turn, might perhaps sublet it to the peasants.

As prices rose in the sixteenth century, those lands which were most suitable for letting out became more sought after by the new landlords, and, in a good year, the tenant also could make a good profit, which more than repaid his rent. Other more practical landowners preferred to reap the profit themselves, and increased their own holdings. So the manors expanded at the cost of adjoining small holdings, which were either bought or acquired by barter, and the landowner could also call upon the labour of those he had bought out by the feudal right of *corvée* or instead receive payments in kind. In the end it led to a new sort of serfdom. The landowners had an interest in retaining labour which could make their lands pay. The labourers almost inevitably conformed to this pattern.

The most striking example of this can be found in Russia, where serf-

dom under the Czars survived longer than in any other country, but the pattern was repeated in many other countries. In more advanced countries where the economic pattern was not so rigid, one finds that this growth of estates did not last long, and the agricultural labourers did not again relapse, without protest, into serfdom. By buying up land at the expense of the peasant and the petty nobility, the great Polish and Bohemian nobles were able to augment their meagre feudal dues either by founding fish hatcheries in Central Bohemia or by growing grain and setting up breweries in the valley of the Vistula.

Society became more rigid, and in a sense more stable. The land workers became reconciled to their lot, and even took on the religion which their master chose. However great their misery they no longer engaged in senseless and violent riots which were, in any case, quickly suppressed by the regular soldiers. This was a development which was apparent in both Catholic and Protestant countries alike, but the Catholic conception of a hierarchical world, here and hereafter, reflected more closely the contemporary situation. One has only to think of the Tintoretto in the Doge's Palace, where God in His glory, the Virgin, angels and saints all have their proper rank and precedence [10]. That was not the main reason why the Counter-Reformation succeeded, but, once it was established, it drew strength from the political and social tendencies of the time.<sup>11</sup>

The Jesuits had undoubtedly played the major role at the Council of Trent and they were probably the most efficient proselytizing force of the Counter-Reformation, but whether they founded a particular style of architecture or painting is still a moot point. Some authorities would like to call the whole Baroque movement Jesuitical, but to find out if this is justifiable it is worth considering their mother church in Rome, the Gesù. It has a dome supported by an octagonal drum; it is neither tall nor big enough to dominate the skyline of Rome. But if you see the Gesù from the Aventine it has a purity of line which can outclass anything built in the Piazza Navona, the Corso or the church of San Carlo ai Catinari near the Campo di Fiore. Or if you approach it from the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele the two storeys of the façade, with the great volutes supporting the triangular pediment, so dominate the vista that they seem almost to block the road [13]. The interior is richly and ostentatiously decorated, and the cupola is not only painted with astonishing virtuosity but its lines are broken by stucco work which gives movement to the whole work [14]. In the left transept there is the astonishing gilded bronze altar of St Ignatius, framed by pillars of lapis lazuli, and crowned by a representation of the Trinity [144]. The Father and the Son are both shown by large statues in white with garments carved from coloured marble, the Holy Ghost is shown by a dove in glory, and between them the world is represented by a vast ball of lapis lazuli. To a casual visitor who cannot be bothered to unravel the significance of these decorations this profuse richness is apt to be repellent.



It does not appeal to those who like the religiosity of the Gothic style or the sombre dignity of the Romanesque. It is equally far removed from the classical churches of the Renaissance. The restrained and pure lines of the church of the Consolation at Todi, which has been attributed to Bramante himself, has nothing in common with it. Sometimes the decoration can be so distracting that one overlooks the most noteworthy characteristics of the church: the single nave bordered by side-chapels, the ground plan of a Latin cross, the shallow semicircular apse without any ambulatory, the tall plain glass windows to admit the varying daylight.

Certainly no church better qualifies to be called Baroque than the Gesù as it now stands. Nor can one deny the Jesuit influence in the most sumptuous and highly decorated Baroque churches. Let us take two examples, both dating from the beginning of the eighteenth century: the first is St Nicolas de Malá Strana in Prague which was built by the Tyrolean architects, the elder Dientzenhofer and his son. Here the interplay and movement created by the contrasting columns, the profusion of bronze and stucco, the dramatic postures of the statues give an almost dance-like effect [176]. The second is the Jesuiti in Venice, which appears at first sight to be hung with cut velvet draperies of green palms on a white ground. It needs an effort to realize that this is a *trompe l'oeil* of amazing virtuosity carried out in incrustated marble. Even the crumpled drapery over the pulpit is of marble. The façades, the first of two orders, and the second of three, also remind us in their general lines of the Gesù. Yet to dub these churches 'Jesuit' is far-fetched. One would have to presuppose that the Jesuits, from the foundation of their order created an entirely new style of building and decoration, that they then exercised a monopoly in it, and that it was they who spread this style, with variations, throughout Catholic Europe. The problem was discussed with all his scientific authority by Pierre Lavedan, and art historians have long since acknowledged as equally mistaken the idea that there was a separate 'Jesuit style' or that the Baroque style should be described as 'Jesuitical'.

It is only too easy to point out the apparent contradiction between the vows of poverty taken by the Jesuits and the richness of the order: its delight in highly ornamented chapels, its rich libraries, fanciful *belles lettres*, its contests in oratory and its theatrical shows. Every major religious order, even while professing poverty and the lack of worldly possessions, had been left enough by generous patrons (and gained even more by wise investment of these gifts) to decorate their churches or monasteries in so strikingly a sumptuous manner that any idea of poverty was never hinted at. Another fallacy is to think that the Jesuits were founded as a teaching order, to educate the children of the great. The education of youth was certainly not the first thing that Ignatius Loyola had in mind. He was more concerned with preaching the gospel to the heathen, even in the remotest parts of the world, and leading back dissidents to the Catholic faith. What is almost as important, both he and his companions thought that there



- II Guercino's painting of *Aurora* in the Casino Ludovisi, Rome, is 'an extraordinary work, in which the new feeling for landscape and atmosphere give unexpected life and force to the antique allegory'. (A. Michel, *Histoire de l'Art*, Vol. VI, p. 92)





was an urgent necessity to add dignity to divine service and express the praise of God in the beauty of ritual.

This new militant order again showed originality in demanding that every member of the society should be available to be sent wherever his superiors might decide. They must be mobile, they must be practical, and because of this they were excused from long sessions of prayer in the choir. Their duty was to preach, to expound to the people the meaning of the ceremonies to which they were bidden and to teach them to sing the glory of God and the saints in the canticles. Religious buildings, erected either by the Jesuits or for them, had to take this into consideration.

A large choir, which was right and also suitable for the Benedictines, Carthusians, and Cistercians, and which had become customary with the mendicant orders, now lost its point. It had become more important that the acoustics of the church should be good, so that the sermon or the canticles might be plainly heard, and that the light should be strong enough to ensure that the congregation could see every gesture of the officiating priest and follow in their missals the prayers offered up by the celebrant. A clearly lit church was the obvious answer in a society which, for the last century now, had been accustomed to having printed books. Nothing could be more natural than that the Jesuits should have their own preference in architecture and favour their own manner—*'il modo nostro'*. But that was a very different thing from systematically imposing one inflexible, orthodox style.

So far as the Gesù is concerned, we now know the history of its building. In the last years of his life, St Ignatius thought it necessary that the Jesuits should have some church in the centre of Rome where their adherents might congregate, for every year they became more eager to hear the offices and sermons of their Fathers in Rome. At first they had to make do with an old and inconvenient church, Santa Maria della Strada. To build a large church in a quarter of the city that was already densely populated would mean a great outlay to purchase the site alone, and then there was the expense of buying up the leaseholds. The Jesuits, in fact, had to find a generous patron. They discovered him in Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, a nephew of the late Pope Paul III. He was a prelate of great magnificence. Nevertheless, like most of the cardinals of his day, though he was in possession of enormous revenues, he spent them so prodigally that it was not always certain that on any given date he would be able to honour his promises.

In 1562 the Cardinal let the Vicar-General of the Jesuits—Lainez, who had succeeded St Ignatius—know that he was prepared to give forty thousand écus in the next four years toward the building of a church, but it was only six years later that anything came of this. The Cardinal then arrived in Rome, bringing with him his architect Vignola, who was already famous. Of the many plans submitted to him the Cardinal selected the most sumptuous and began discussing them with Francesco Borgia,

who had succeeded Lainez as General of the Society. Though he by no means disliked Vignola's plans, Borgia knew that Cardinal Farnese was certainly not able to meet all the costs, and was afraid that too ambitious a plan would land the Society into such financial difficulties that he would be crippled in carrying out his other duties. Things were further complicated since the General had himself summoned an architect to Rome from Ferrara. He was Giovanni Tristano, who for several years had been working for the Jesuits both in Italy and abroad. Tristano knew better than anyone the practical difficulties which had to be faced. There was no quarrel nor indeed any real opposition between the two architects: the famous Vignola, upon whom Cardinal Farnese insisted, and the obscure person whom Borgia had brought in because of his specialized knowledge. Vignola's plans were superb and Giovanni Tristano only raised certain practical objections to them, which both the Cardinal and Vignola accepted. On one thing, however, the Cardinal was insistent: the church must be magnificent. The flat ceiling which Tristano wished to have, because it would both improve the acoustics and recall the ancient basilicas which he so much admired, was turned down as not being grand enough. So a vaulted ceiling, which could more easily be decorated in the grand manner, was chosen.

In 1568, the foundation stone was laid, and a medal was struck to celebrate this. The obverse shows a fine broad façade, in two orders. The second stage is not voluted, but shows great richness of decoration and is crowned by a pediment, pyramids and statuary [13]. The actual work was entrusted not to Vignola, who had already received quite considerable fees for his plans, but to Father Tristano, and in the course of building some modifications were introduced. Several other architects were asked to submit alternative designs for the façade and, to Vignola's bitter disappointment, his, that had been stamped on the medal, was abandoned in favour of the design by Giacomo della Porta. This was a more sombre composition, which put added emphasis on the verticals, and was reminiscent of the balance one sees in a Renaissance façade or the harmonious lines which Alberti gave to Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Tristano remained the official architect for the Gesù until his death in 1575, when the post was taken over by Father Rosis.

It is extremely difficult to find out exactly who was responsible for what by the time the building was completed. The creative inspiration certainly came from Vignola, who had qualities of imagination that Tristano quite lacked. The majestic breadth of the Gesù is due to him, and if we compare it with Tristano's work in the Jesuit churches at Perugia or Forlì, it is clear that Vignola is a master of quite a different calibre.

Some have seen an affinity between the Gesù and the superb church of Sant'Andrea which Alberti built at Mantua [16]. There also we find the single nave; the pillars which support the arches of the side chapels are flanked by fluted pilasters, and between them the wall (at Mantua with the

addition of small niches) builds up a beautiful and rhythmic pattern 'based on a simple alternation'.<sup>12</sup> Where does this predilection for a church consisting of a nave flanked only by chapels between the buttresses come from? In a work dedicated to Giovanni Tristano, Father Pirri comments on that architect's liking for this plan, and ascribes it to the influence of Serlio. Emile Mâle thinks that Cardinal Farnese had insisted upon Vignola using this form and had himself been influenced by the church of Santa Maria Montserrat in Rome—a church built by the Catalans on the model of the cathedral at Albi. Pierre Moisy maintains that the Gesù is not, strictly speaking, a church of one nave; the aisles are there, he says, though by being as it were pinched in at various points they have become a series of side chapels between the buttresses. One may disagree about this, but Moisy is perfectly right when he observes that it is unnecessary to look for Catalan influence. Vignola, even had he never seen Sant'Andrea at Mantua, could find churches enough in Rome (San Marcello, Sant Agostino, or San Luigi dei Francesi) that had already adopted the single nave with a series of side chapels between the buttresses.<sup>13</sup> It was an idea that was in the air. More important was the victory of the Latin cross with its large transepts (at the Gesù very wide ones) over the Greek cross, which had been preferred during the Renaissance. The choice of the Latin cross emphasized the importance of the altar, was admirably suited for processions and was a revival of the traditional Christian form that had been current in the Middle Ages. This explains in part why it was adopted by the Counter-Reformation and why, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Paul V decided to lengthen the nave of St Peter's by the addition of two bays.

But the adoption of the plan of a Latin cross did not necessarily mean a nave and no aisles. The desire to complete a church as quickly as possible played a part in the choice of that plan. The building of the Gesù clearly shows two apparently contradictory desires: to build rapidly a fine sumptuously decorated church, and not to spend much money. Yet by 1584 the problem had been solved and on 15th August Pope Gregory XIII paid a visit to the church and expressed his admiration of it. On 26th September it was consecrated by Cardinal Santa Severina.

It is true that the decoration of the cupola had to wait till the following century and it was not until then that the chapels in the transept were completed by the frescoes of Baciccio in the chapel of St Ignatius [III] and the superb altar, which was the work of Padre Pozzo [144].

Thus an essential part of the decoration, which is what mostly impresses (or displeases) the present-day visitor and is the most Baroque feature of the church, is much later than the building itself. But we must remember that the construction combined tradition with novelty, and managed to adapt the technique of the Renaissance both to the new ideals of the Counter-Reformation and to the practical needs of the Society of Jesus.

For some time it was in the balance whether this fine church would serve as a model for chapels built for the Society and thus exercise an



influence on the whole religious architecture of the time.<sup>14</sup> Certainly the Society itself made no definite decision about any style best suited to its churches. It is worth bearing in mind that it remained silent. The new order was not then interested in counteracting the achievements of the Renaissance, or in reviving earlier traditions. What recommendations it made were severely practical: the buildings should be soundly constructed and planned functionally. This advice was chiefly addressed to the colleges: nothing had then been decided about churches.

Since 1565 it had been understood that Rectors (i.e. the administrators appointed to run the colleges by the Vicar) were to be responsible for the construction of buildings, though the plans were to be sent to Rome for the Vicar's approval. In practice the plans were forwarded to Rome through the intermediary of the Provincial. One cannot but wonder if, after Vignola had provided the House in Rome with a church that became renowned as one of the most beautiful in the city, the Vicar (or his advisers) were not inclined to favour the Gesù as a model and impose the plan on all new Jesuit churches. To put it another way, any building undertaken before the Gesù had been built was expected primarily to provide the best conditions possible for carrying out the Society's missionary work, and if it fulfilled its function there was no feeling that one style was better than another. But if the *modo nostro*, the *modo proprio*, of the Society had found its most perfect expression in a church that was not only functional but was also praised as a great work of art, would it not be wise to recommend, or even order the Society to copy it in the new buildings? This appeared to be so logical and self-evident that before 1580 Vicar-General Mercurian sent off to the Spanish provinces (and probably other provinces as well) a certain number of sample plans. The Provincials then had only to choose which one suited them best. Should they think that some details ought to be modified they had to explain their reasons to the General who remained the final judge, and might or might not give his permission; but even this attempt to introduce uniformity left open a certain choice of plans.

Recent research into various archives has discovered the plans which were, in theory, probably favoured by Rome. The Gesù still maintains its influence, especially in the plan of a nave flanked by side chapels, which was retained and became the most pronounced characteristic of the *modo nostro*. But the history of Jesuit building, which has been known in detail for some years now, shows that this attempt at imperialism by Vicar-General Mercurian had little success. Throughout the seventeenth and also the eighteenth centuries the plans submitted from the provinces for the Vicar's approval are proof that they still held the initiative—or rather their architects did, whether Jesuit or layman—and we find the Society putting up churches in most varied styles, sometimes strictly traditional, sometimes daring and imaginative. But they were never able to escape from the strict control, that often became petty and extraordinarily detailed,

exercised by the authorities in Rome. The Vicars again and again showed their displeasure when their recommendations were not followed and did not hesitate to blame severely those responsible.

There is no doubt that sometimes the Gesù was quite deliberately copied. One example is the church built for the order in Paris in Richelieu's time, St Paul and St Louis. Certainly the nave here was designed by a Jesuit architect, Brother Martellangelo,<sup>15</sup> yet in other of his works this gifted man draws his inspiration from models far removed from the Gesù, and the pretty church of Sainte-Marie-des-Monts that he built is regular and classical. On one occasion we know that a plan, very similar to the Gesù, was submitted by a province and, for purely opportunist reasons, turned down by the Vicar. To understand the variety of Jesuit churches—and it is stupid to talk of a 'Jesuit style'—one must get away from the conception of the Jesuits being an imperious, inhuman (an exaggeration of the well-known phrase *perinde ac cadaver*) and impersonal order. We should consider more realistically the conditions under which they had to fulfil their mission.

In the instructions sent out by Mercurian,<sup>16</sup> one comes across this urgent injunction—'when there is a reason for and possibility of building, the Father Provincial will point out why it is necessary and if it is possible to achieve it without running into debt'. Without running into debt—and that was in instructions sent to the rich Spanish provinces! When one turns to France, Germany or Bohemia, the beginnings of this order, which later became so powerful, are found to be very modest. What they undertook had to show an immediate return. Had they to build a church, then local materials must be used and local workmen employed who were probably already set in their ways. There was no question of re-training them. A practical Provincial and his architect had to take this into consideration. The plans put forward had to be ones that artisans could easily carry out. They had also to become adepts at fitting them into the land which the Jesuits had either bought or been given. Sometimes the site was spacious, sometimes cramped; or perhaps it was already over-built, so that the expenses of expropriation had to be taken into account in costing the building. The overriding necessity was to finish the church as quickly as possible, whether it was for one of the Jesuit houses or for one of their colleges. Then finally, as the building of the Gesù had shown, it was necessary to humour the patron. The opinions of the faithful had to be taken into consideration, whether it was in a town or in a country district that the new church was to be built.

The international character of the Society has been much exaggerated and the fact overlooked that each country was responsible for recruitment in its provinces. After joining the Society the Fathers gave up neither their nationality nor their particular conception of what was beautiful. The Jesuit churches in Flanders faithfully retained Flemish characteristics. In France, the architects of the Society—Turmel, Martellangelo, Mangrain—

showed very distinct and diverse talents: they are all recognizable as men of their period and of a particular country. They were influenced by so many considerations, that any attempts by Rome to impose uniformity would have been put off, and probably frustrated. Even the heads of the Order scarcely entertained such an ambition. The Vicars, no less than their technical and artistic advisers and their auditors, were far too clever not to recognize that their ends would most easily be achieved by manoeuvring with the utmost flexibility.

The central authority never gave up its right of control, and one cannot say that henceforward building was left to the fancy or ingenuity of the Provincials. But equally it no longer tried to impose abstract and rigid rules on people who were inevitably the best judges of local needs and local conditions.

It is clear that to speak of a 'Jesuit style' is not historically justifiable: indeed it is often completely contrary to the facts. If many of the Jesuit churches do have characteristics in common, it is due to the period during which they were built. The Society achieved an eminent place in world history, but this lasted for a comparatively short period, from about the middle of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century—hardly more than two hundred years. At the beginning of this epoch the rules of architecture were based on the antique and interpreted by Renaissance masters whether Alberti or Vignola; then Roman Baroque, with its free interpretation, its heavy ornamentation, and experiments in new ostentatious effects gained a widespread influence.

The Society was influenced by the tendencies of the age, turning them, if possible, to its advantage but also willing to adapt itself to the contemporary scene. It is only to be expected that it made use of many models rather than conformed to one uniform style. Its members had to become great builders of necessity, but as they became successful the Jesuits were also inspired by a sense of their own glory, and they extended their churches throughout Europe and Latin America, one of their favourite mission fields. They helped to diffuse certain forms of art and taste, but they were far from creating them. If one compares the Gesù with, for example, the Jesuit churches in France, it is clear that there was a conflict of Classicism and Baroque; the Jesuits had neither instigated it nor were concerned to resolve it.<sup>17</sup>

Wars ravaged Italy and an onslaught of barbarians suddenly burst over the most civilized country in the world. The Eternal City was sacked, and the religious anxieties which had for so long a time worried the Christian world were suddenly brought to a head by Luther's revolt.

The intellectual pleasure which had found such serene expression in the untroubled, harmonious masterpieces of the Renaissance, was followed by a time of sorrow and agony that could only find expression in sombre or tortured forms. Yet the Renaissance had been so profoundly humane that even when it was most assured it had shown that it could comprehend



sorrow and agony as well as happiness and certainty. Men had no need to turn away from the Renaissance when called on to face new conditions of life. The ideals and the lessons which it had taught in so many varied fields still retained their efficacy.

Even the Council of Trent derived more from the Renaissance than is commonly admitted. Its theologians had too much in common with the humanists to declare that man was fallen without a chance of redemption, or was deprived of individual responsibility in seeking his salvation. In admitting that even elegances that were not strictly Christian might contribute towards this, they still allowed a place for literature and the arts in the spiritual outlook and life of the faithful, provided of course, that nothing should run contrary to the doctrine of the church. Occasionally there was a brutal reaction against the more pagan and sensual aspects of the Renaissance. But it is no less true that when a new style reanimated both social and artistic life, it was one which was as much a child of the Renaissance as of the Council of Trent.

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## CHAPTER II

9

# *Roma Triumphans*

1600—a year of jubilee, and of comparative peace on the continent—saw a great crowd of pilgrims flock to Rome. Under the pontificate of Clement VIII (1592-1605) the Papacy could see how great the successes were that it had won in less than forty years. Even if Lepanto, which must forever be celebrated as a great victory, had not caused the collapse of Islam, even though the wars between Cross and Crescent still raged on Hungarian soil at the very gates of the Empire, at least the threat of an invasion by the infidels had been averted. Since Lepanto the Holy See could turn its attention to the conversion of Lutheran and Calvinistic Germany, and did so in a singularly realistic manner. It still, thanks to the loyalty of the princes, maintained a foothold in Bavaria and in Styria. But the task it faced was immense. The rulers might be of great help, but they were none the less fickle and often weak human beings, and the Papacy was careful in its dealings with them to take up no position that might mortgage the future or limit its freedom to manoeuvre.

The King of Spain was a devout Catholic, but the Spanish rule over one part of Italy raised serious difficulties since it made many of the Italian clergy more dependent on Madrid than on Rome. The alliance between the Pope and the King of Spain was opportune, but it could not be allowed to become a principle. For the Pope, it was a very lucky chance that another great Catholic power, France, acted as a counterweight to Spain; the main preoccupation of the Popes was to prevent war between the two. The conflict was avoided for no less than thirty-five years, and when it then broke out the Popes tried, though in vain, to restore peace as soon as possible. They realized that if the war were prolonged the balance of power must be upset, and whoever was victorious would inevitably be tempted to impose his will upon Europe and make the Pope little more than his private chaplain.

But in 1600 such things lay hidden in the future. On the contrary, it was reckoned at the time that one of the most startling successes the Church had achieved was the conversion of Henri de Navarre. In private life he might be a lecher, and also, when he thought about things, a sceptic as well, but the zeal with which he assumed the title of 'Most Christian' was as satisfactory as his marriage in the same year to Maria de Medici (an Italian

princess and niece of the Grand Duke of Tuscany), and the protection which he offered, in spite of some popular outcry, to the Jesuits in France. It may seem paradoxical but it is true that, although the Edict of Nantes had but two years earlier established Protestantism in France, Henri IV inspired more confidence in the Vatican than the Emperor Rudolph, who had been brought up in Spain.

From other quarters too the news had been encouraging. Four years earlier Clement VIII had scored another victory. In Poland the Catholic and the Orthodox churches had been united by the Concordat of Brest-Litovsk. Though the Poles preserved their own rites, their liturgy, and more especially the Calixtine communion (which was of such importance that it was continually said to be the stumbling-block where the reconciliation of Germany was concerned), the Orthodox Poles had returned to the bosom of the church. This was largely due to the Jesuits, and two of them in particular: one an Italian, Possevino, the other a Pole, Skarga, who was a renowned patriot. Kiev became a centre of the Catholic Reformation, and theology was taught there again; tracts and catechisms were printed, and Kiev also exercised considerable influence in Russia. Possevino had negotiated with Ivan the Terrible personally, and no one could be sure whether Russia itself would not return to Rome. It seemed no mere chimera. The difficulties would be formidable, but perhaps the future might be won by sheer audacity. One must bear all these facts in mind to appreciate properly the atmosphere in Rome at the beginning of the seventeenth century. There was a fully justified feeling of almost triumphant success in the air, and this was to play a considerable part in reshaping both social and artistic life during the following years.

That the Counter-Reformation reacted against the sensuosity and paganism of the Renaissance is undeniable, and to that we can partly trace the austerity which we find in the artistic output immediately after the Council of Trent. But the taste for grandeur which had been a characteristic of the Renaissance no less than of ancient Rome did not die out. It was soon to receive a new lease of life, in keeping with the triumphs of the Papacy.

At the end of the sixteenth century artistic life in Rome drew its inspiration from two sources. This is apt to be overlooked if one only stresses the austerity of the Counter-Reformation, or, on the other hand, the beginnings of the Baroque. Though it could not reconcile these extremes, perhaps the most potent force in the evolution of these new artistic trends was still a desire to adapt the old well-known rules to novel conditions, one of which was, as we have seen at the Gesù, an imperious necessity for rapid and functional building.

The publications of Vignola, who died in 1573, and the *Four Books of Architecture* by Palladio which appeared in 1570 (ten years before his death) made a lasting impression on builders. The craftsmen considered themselves, at least technically, disciples of the Renaissance: the classical orders, pilasters, triangular or segmental pediments all provided elements



which they could use. Most of them were not Roman by birth and it seems they preferred to follow, perhaps from some religious feeling, the traditions of Florentine ecclesiastical architecture. The Latin cross or, under the influence of the Gesù, the plan of a single nave and a façade of two superimposed orders were the two plans most frequently used in the Counter-Reformation churches. They gave them simplicity and symmetry.

The severity which we find in Roman façades of the time should not be looked on, however, as the only trend in the Counter-Reformation, for it was at the same time that the chapels of Santa Maria Maggiore burst forth in all their rich and sumptuous decoration, and the south façade of St John Lateran was majestically designed in the Palladian manner by Domenico Fontana [12]. There was one artist who managed to weld these two tendencies together into a new style, Carlo Maderna (1556–1629) who, without a thought for theories, became one of the first Baroque architects merely by trying to solve the practical problems with which he was faced. He was a nephew of Fontana and had worked with him during the prolific years of the pontificate of Sixtus V.

His façade of Santa Susanna (1603) breaks entirely new ground, though at first sight it might not appear to differ much from a façade by Giacomo della Porta or by the elder Lunghi [15]. But the traditional elements of design are so arranged that the play of light and shade gives such movement and depth that what one would expect to be a static composition comes to life. The six great Corinthian columns in the lower order, a couple placed at each side of the entrance, and one at each end of the façade, give the whole façade a rhythmic movement. Two Corinthian columns at the corners are slightly in recess of the great columns. In the first storey the columns are surmounted by pilasters whose flat surfaces contrast so well with the rich rotundity of the columns. The entablature between the two storeys, the volutes with their graceful returns that emphasize the vertical lines of the building, the great triangular, richly sculptured pediment that crowns the whole is lightened by a balustrade of such delicacy that it might be lace work, and the large niches which balance the tall central window all combine to make one forget the bare surfaces of the façade. The façade is so much more clearly articulated and vigorous than any that had preceded it, that we may justly speak of an entirely new interpretation of spatial values.

Columns henceforth were to play a more important role. One might almost talk of them winning a victory over pilasters and founding a new tradition. But this victory was certainly not absolute. Only a few paces away from Santa Susanna, in the same stretch of street, we find the façade of Santa Maria della Vittoria, which was built twenty-three years later, and its sobriety appears archaic and twenty-three years out of date [17]. But generally speaking Roman architects in future employed pillars as an essential element in their buildings, even though sometimes they were so disengaged they became almost an entity in themselves. These tall and

beautiful columns, catching the light, carving out shadows, have retained their sublimity throughout the centuries. The pleasure we get from seeing them now is as vivid as when they were first conceived and built.

Maderna thought of using them at Sant' Andrea della Valle, but he was never able to finish his plan, and though he was very free in his interpretation of the design of his predecessor, Carlo Rainaldi, he remained faithful to his spirit [16]. The façade is one of the most lovely in Baroque Rome and the columns not only give it rhythm but seem, even more than the walls, to support the building. By the middle of the century one could see them everywhere. In the church of SS. Vincenzo and Anastasio, built by Lunghi the Younger in 1650, the dozen superimposed columns give an impression of a mighty organ [18]. The porch of Santa Maria in Via Lata by Pietro da Cortona, on the Corso, has two columned galleries (1662) superimposed [20]. Santa Maria in Campitelli, built by Rainaldi in 1665, owes its joyful solemnity to superimposed columns, standing free and recessed, which capture the light and give to the shadows between their alternate rows a perpetually changing vivacity [21]. But in designing these façades of two orders, the principles which had been established at the beginning of the Counter-Reformation were still observed: the second had to be narrower and surmounted by a pediment. It seems, nevertheless, that some audacious spirit has breathed on the various elements and released them from the formula, so that they regain independence and individual life. Even if Father Orazio Grassi, designing the façade of the chapel of St Ignatius's College in 1650, gave it a pious and traditional flavour that recalls Giacomo della Porta—its vastness seems even increased by the use of volutes—here too columns are used to add a sense of movement and lend a contemporary air to its archaism [22].

This is to run through more than half a century of architecture far too quickly and so to stand on the threshold of the Baroque without having considered the expansion of civilization which is an essential factor of its background, but it is necessary to show how the façade of Santa Susanna incorporated many of the traditional aspects of the Counter-Reformation and yet gave birth to a new tradition which was to form one aspect of Baroque. Shortly after Santa Susanna had been completed, Maderna was called on to undertake a very much greater work. In 1605 Cardinal Borghese became Pope under the title of Paul V. He belonged to a family of dilettanti and patrons. His ambition was, above all, to complete St Peter's. Whether because he thought that the plan of a Latin cross was more appropriate for great ceremonies or because he wished the new church to have the dimensions of the ancient basilica of Constantine (and Michelangelo's plans had curtailed these to the west) he decided to lengthen the nave and then build a façade [23].

From the designs submitted to him, he chose that of Maderna. The undertaking was one which might be hazardous for any architect. The church by Michelangelo was, one might say, already finished. Vignola and

then Giacomo della Porta had left their mark on it, one by the small campaniles at the base of the dome, and the other by giving the cupola [27] a greater height and spring than Michelangelo himself had envisaged. What had been achieved must remain and it was essential not to spoil the effect. Yet if the church were to be extended westwards the dome would inevitably be less easily seen. Michelangelo's dome would have been quite ruined, and even Giacomo della Porta's was likely to lose at least some of its effect, and have not the classicists told us that Maderna's work is a monstrosity, showing how the bad taste of the Baroque could wreck the exquisite achievements of the Renaissance? Most people accept that uncritically, but anyone who studies the origin and aim of Maderna's work finds that the truth is not so simple. Seen from the inside, the architect has added the three bays of the nave almost imperceptibly to the Greek cross by Michelangelo. It is as though the nave were but a narthex leading up to the centre of the church, where the great pillars and the cupola continue to dominate and give the building its essential character.

The problems raised by Maderna's façade are not so easily disposed of [24]. Here one must take into account its functional purpose. The Renaissance Popes who had reconstructed St Peter's had chiefly thought of beautifying the church erected over the tomb of the First of the Apostles. They may, according to their temperaments and the ideas of their times, differ slightly from one another, but their aim remained unaltered. Crowned by the great dome of Michelangelo and approached by the colonnaded porch, here was a church of pilgrimage, the most beautiful there was.

When Paul V became Pope things began to be looked at from a different angle. St Peter's was becoming, in rivalry with St John Lateran, the Cathedral of Rome and therefore of the whole Christian world<sup>2</sup> and of the Papacy. No doubt it still remained the incomparable sanctuary erected over the grave of St Peter, but now, much more, it was where one could see Peter himself in the person of his successor, and where one could pay homage to the unbroken tradition of the Church. The Latin cross plan enabled the Pope, after Apostolic Confession, to walk through the church to the piazza and there, in the open air, to give his blessing to the multitude —*urbi et orbi*. It was a fine spectacle, worthy of the new prestige won by the Papacy at the Council of Trent, and encouraged by the passion of the Italians for outdoor shows. After the success of the Jubilee Year of 1600, it also underlined the triumphs and importance of the Papacy. To say that no one knows what caprice led this pontifical Maecenas to erect the façade of St Peter's is nonsense. It was the completion of the basilica, and it also provided a place from which the Pope might give his blessing to the world. It is a building that exists in its own right.

Maderna's work should be compared with the designs drawn up by the Florentine, Ludovico Cigoli, which consisted of a colossal gallery flanking a fine church façade of two orders [25]. Cigoli sought a solution in compromise. Maderna solved it by stressing its second function, and, by erect-



ing a place where Benediction could be given from St Peter's, had to supply the basilica with a façade. At this point aestheticians may be expected to raise some subtle objections about Baroque pretending to be one thing while it is something else. But might it not be, looked at historically, rather simpler than that? Surely a building with columns of a gigantic order in the centre and flanked by pilasters, is the proper frame for the entrance to the basilica at ground level and above for the Benediction Loggia [24].

At the sides, large arches lead to the vestibule. It is a palace giving on to the church as naturally as the windows give on to the nave. From the great pontifical hall the Pope may, according to circumstances, give his Benediction to the world from the loggia or, should he wish, use a window opposite to bestow it only on the faithful gathered in prayer in the church.

Yet when he built this palace of a façade Maderna was evidently aware of the effect it would have on the dome. Had a design like Cigoli's been carried out, two storeys high, one would have seen even less of it. Maderna was content with a pediment which was not very different from the one suggested by Michelangelo. The entablature commemorates Paul V in majestic lettering and above, the balustrade is decorated with thirteen gigantic statues of Christ and the apostles. Considered in relation to the cathedral as a whole the strong horizontal line makes the façade look too long drawn out and too low. Maderna himself wished to alleviate this by building two campaniles at the sides, but that project was only begun later under Bernini, and was soon abandoned. His own work was finished in a few years, though he continued to hold the post of surveyor of the fabric. The rapidity of its completion resulted in the employment of a great number of artists and artisans: overseers, stucco workers, masons, marblers and modellers. Amongst these there was a boy of fifteen who had run away from his father, a Milanese architect. He came as a *scalpellino*, and was called Francesco Castelli. He was, like Maderna, a native of Lugano and on his mother's side related to him through a Borromini. That was the name he now adopted and was to make famous.

Maderna, however, left much still to be done. Inside, the arches in the aisles leading up to the massive pillars that support the dome looked by contrast rather puny [58], and the very immensity of the basilica called for some ornamentation, and also for something which would give it a unifying characteristic; finally there was the problem of what to do with the piazza. Like the Piazza San Marco in Venice it should be, as it were, a vestibule to the cathedral and remain architecturally subordinate, though possessing its own distinctive features [26].

Whatever solution future architects might find, they would have to take into account the work of Maderna which in itself evolved from Michelangelo's. It would have to be grandly majestic and astounding—not from any desire to astonish through its vulgar ostentation, but to arouse wonderment in the pilgrim's breast and heighten his zeal. The triumphant and the

36 astonishing were henceforward to play a great part in the Baroque, though they expressed only a part of the Baroque genius.

One cannot but wonder where the Popes got enough money to finance such expensive plans. There were, of course, all the gifts which poured in from every Catholic country but in reality the fact was that the Popes had formed the habit, since the beginning of the century, of signing bills (*monti*) which were for the most part taken up by Italian bankers, mainly those in Genoa. The interest due became a heavier and heavier burden on the finances of the Papacy. Jean Delumeau has shown how, during the second half of the sixteenth century, these funds were raised, and with what disastrous results to the Romans themselves, who preferred to invest in these *monti* and become rentiers rather than to encourage any commercial or industrial venture. The laziness of a large proportion of the populace, combined with a misdirected charity, led to a scandalous increase of beggary, pauperism, and brigandism. The beauty of Baroque Rome covered many a hideous reality. But the constant building at least assured that at least one industry prospered and, if one examines the signature of various bills issued by the Papacy, it is evident that at least some ecclesiastics and laymen had vast capital resources. These came from territorial holdings, and once more we see how profit from the land and the work of the peasantry was the basis of the whole structure of this wealth.

There was another feature of religious building which was much favoured by the architects of the seventeenth century, and that was the cupola. The tradition was classical in origin and had been handed down by the Florentine school. Correggio had added to its glory by his painting of one that seemed to open up new and celestial vistas [7 & I]. But the form of the cupola alone had a universal and religious symbolism.<sup>3</sup> It represented the celestial sphere and also the universe. So perfect geometrically is its form that it might evoke the infinite or the idea of God Himself. It is placed on a drum, shallow or high, which lifts it away from the main mass of the building, and it is crowned with a lantern which seems to echo both the drum and the cupola itself, on a minute scale. Roman Baroque adopted it, and its example was followed by other European countries. At Sant' Andrea della Valle, Maderna built the highest cupola after St Peter's; at Santa Maria Maggiore, Fontana crowned the Cappella Sistina, which had been erected by Sixtus V, with a cupola, and this was echoed when Ponzio and Cigoli built the Cappella Borghese for Paul V. San Carlo ai Catinari, dedicated to St Carlo Borromeo, has one, and so have Santa Maria dei Monti and, in the Forum, SS Luca e Martina [19]. Domes were still to be built by Bernini, Borromini and Rainaldi so that, as the century ran its course, there was no quarter of Rome without its cupola. They give such a distinctive look to the city that if one sees a domed church elsewhere one is inevitably reminded of Rome [28].

The cupola also accustomed the eye to those curved lines for which the Baroque architects were to show an almost extravagant fancy, and which

they used for the most charming inventions that brought down on their heads bitter reproaches from the partisans of regularity of form.

Rome of the triumphant Jubilee Year of 1600 and of the works carried out later under Paul V was not entirely a city taken up with religious questions or the building of churches. The Maecenas touch which characterized the Pope descended from uncle to nephew, and is found again in the Farnese cardinals. The son of Alessandro Farnese, Ottavio, was, when quite a young man, summoned from Parma to Rome to assume the purple in 1591. He took up residence in the family palace—the soul of a young prelate of the Counter-Reformation was by no means insensible to the glories of this world. No sooner had he settled down than he planned to decorate the *camerini* and the great gallery with frescoes depicting the glorious achievements of the Farnese family [31].

Ever since his youth he had been used to the rich luminosity of Correggio and the Venetian painters and had little taste for the rather dry manner and lack of breadth in the Tuscan and Umbrian artists who were then receiving all the commissions in Rome. He therefore called in three artists who had won a great reputation in Bologna, where they had founded an academy. They were the three Carracci: two brothers, Annibale and Agostino, and their cousin Ludovico. Annibale, their leader, was a passionate admirer of Correggio and the Venetians, and through this trio northern Italy scored a victory in Rome where, at this date, the greatest artists were architects rather than painters. Cardinal Ottavio never carried out his scheme of glorifying his dynasty. The ceilings of the Farnese were instead painted by the Carracci with mythological scenes [30]. It was no great innovation, either in its inspiration or in its extraordinarily fine technique of perfect design and rich luminosity. It is linked up with the Renaissance of Raphael and Giulio Romano.

But the Carracci brought their pupils, Guido Reni and Domenichino, to work with them. Later on came Guercino, and Rome could henceforward boast of a team of great artists who soon received a variety of commissions for the decoration of palaces or of churches. Of the former the *Aurora* by Guido in the Palazzo Rospigliosi is outstanding [29], and the same theme painted by Guercino in the Villa Ludovisi became so famous that the villa was renamed after it [II]. Both were triumphs of a sophisticated academic art, and of great aristocratic grace.<sup>4</sup>

Church painting took on a different character, and was bound by the principles laid down by the Council of Trent. It was didactic and it celebrated, not without eloquence, the sufferings of the martyrs and the glorious rewards which they received in Heaven. In this spirit Guido painted his great *Crucifixion of St Peter*, Guercino his *Apotheosis of St Jerome*, and Domenichino *The Last Communion of St Jerome* [33].<sup>5</sup> They are beautiful works which were exaggeratedly praised when they first appeared and later fell into undeserved contempt.

These Bolognese painters possessed technique, facility and invention,



though they were doubtless rather conventional in their depiction of pathos. There is no doubt that they were sensitive to the vast number of artistic works to be seen in Rome and that these aroused their interest and gave them pleasure, but in spite of that, these pupils of Carracci never escaped from the influence of one genius—Caravaggio—who by his manner and through various circumstances had become an enemy of their master.<sup>6</sup>

Caravaggio was of low birth, violent and passionate, and in some respects immature, but he had such rare power, that no one who painted at that time could ignore the qualities of his masterpieces. He has been described as one of those who could best evoke the conflict between light and shade.<sup>7</sup> He was, however, unpopular in some circles because of his uncompromising naturalism, and it is understandable that the paintings he did of the *Entombment*, the *Death of the Virgin* [34], and episodes from the life of St Matthew for the church of San Luigi dei Francesi [35], revolted by their brutality the refined taste of the Roman aristocracy.

Others disliked seeing the Virgin or the saints depicted as common people, although the religious paintings by Caravaggio might appeal to others for these very qualities. In those faces lined by everyday cares and harsh weather, the humble folk could recognize people who shared their own fears and hopes. The very gestures used by the people were to be seen in these pictures, for the painter drew direct from street life and never posed his models in a studio. The incomparable *Madonna of Loretto*, painted at the time of the Jubilee of 1600 is (as Jean Delumeau has pointed out in a moving commentary) also an historical document of first class importance about the life of pilgrims.<sup>8</sup> The two old men, kneeling to the Virgin and being received by her, radiate a pure and true faith and a feeling of religious poetry [36].

In dealing with the religious aspect of the Counter-Reformation one must remember that it was the humble people who sustained it and clung to it. One should not, as it is all too easy to do, think of it in terms of Popes, cardinals or theologians. Nor when one considers religious works of art should one forget the audience they were designed to appeal to: it was vastly greater than the small circle of patrons.

Rome, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, became a city of the arts and was to remain the centre of artistic life for over a hundred years. This was not a sudden happening, but a natural outcome of the movement that had begun immediately after the Council of Trent. It was a city with so rapidly increasing a population that, more than anywhere else, questions of town planning or administration arose and had to be solved: streets and squares had to be planned, drinking water brought in and fountains built. But it was not a city like the cities of the Renaissance had been, or like those ports that later on were to spring up on an Atlantic seaboard or, still later, the industrial centres.

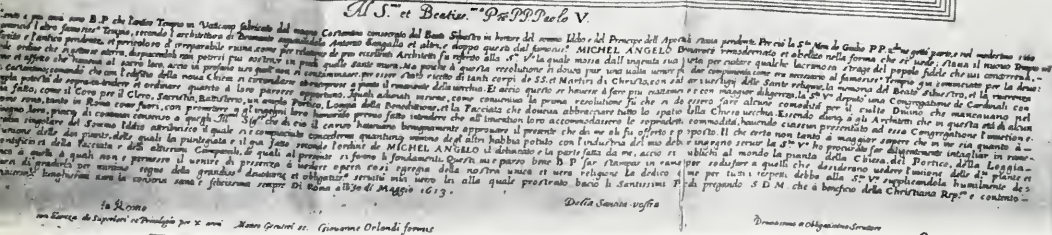
It was meant to be a spectacular city—a religiously spectacular one—though by that we do not mean that it was a place only for prayers and



The façade of Santa Maria in Campitelli, by Rainaldi, has a joyous quality despite its solemn magnificence  
 The vast façade of Sant Ignazio, by Grassi, is made even wider by its volutes









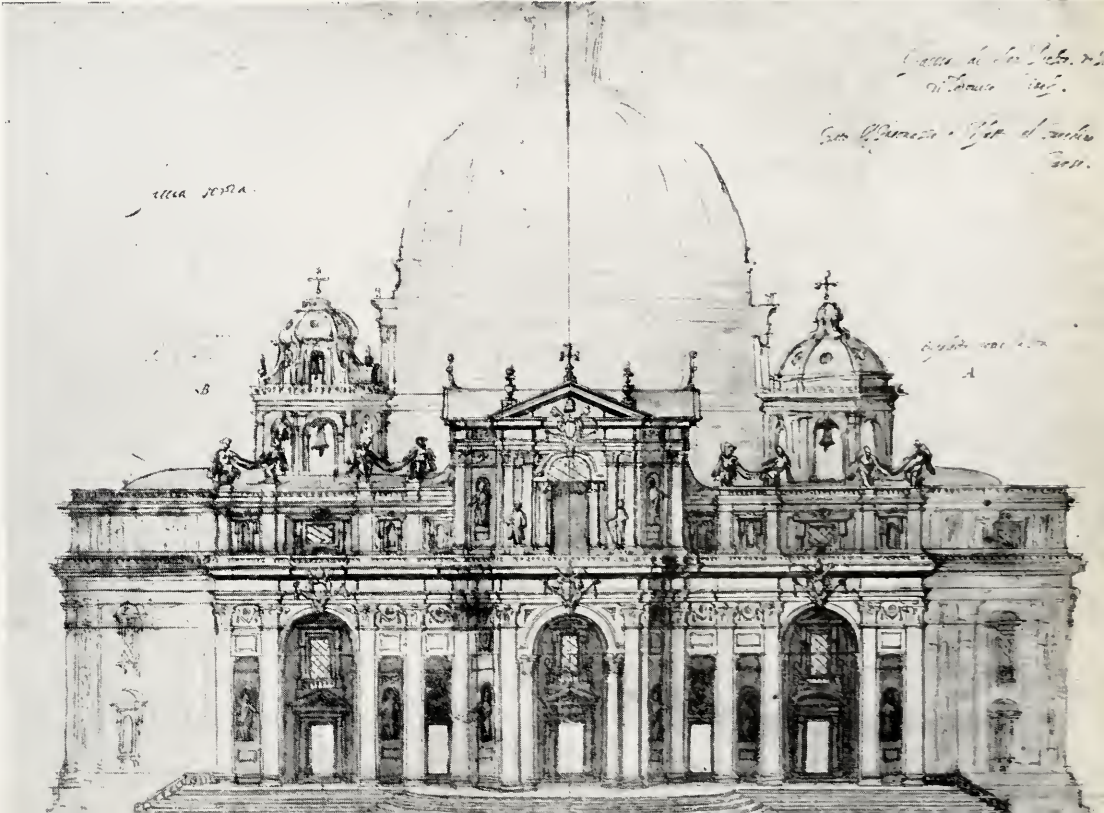
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In 1605 Maderna extended the nave of St Peter's, forming the Benediction Loggia and the façade of the basilica giving on to the Piazza

The Florentine Ludovico Cigoli planned a gallery on a colossal scale, in the centre of which would rise a beautiful church façade carried out in two orders; but his was one of the rejected projects for St Peter's

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26 A magnificent building, at once composite and harmonious, in which the Baroque has carried to completion what the Renaissance had begun. St Peter's



in Rome is still the most impressive church in modern Europe, as this general view shows





27 The dome of St Peter's was designed by Michelangelo, but later adapted by Della Porta who gave it more height and spring



Domes rise from every part of Rome and are so characteristic of the city's skyline that wherever else a traveller sees a domed church it reminds him of Rome

*Aurora*, Casino Rospigliosi, by Guido Reni. 'The Sun's chariot rides on the clouds, drawn by a quadriga, accompanied by a procession of the Hours and preceded by Aurora, who is carrying flowers.' (A. Michel, *Histoire de l'art*,







- 30 'The central composition of the vault [of the Palazzo Farnese], the Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne, is crowded with figures and is as full as possible of joy and richness.' (A. Michel, *Histoire de l'art*)
- 31 General view of the Gallery in the Palazzo Farnese, on the vaults of which Carracci painted the themes of mythological poetry





edification. It did not have the aspect of a place given over to penitence and meditation: it was a triumphant city, whither people flocked from every country to celebrate the victories which the Church had won over heresy and paganism.<sup>9</sup> Its magnificence not only tried to express the joyousness of this victory but also to move the imaginations and hearts of the pilgrims to contemplate a far greater magnificence: the glory of paradise.

It was inspired by a different spirit from that of the Renaissance, and its values no longer concerned man as he is in this world, but man as a spiritual being fighting to attain eternal happiness. The whole feeling of the times had changed: exuberance and a taste for the marvellous led artists to search for new forms in which balance and poise were not, as they had been during the Renaissance, of supreme importance.

Understandably enough new trends arose and became more and more firmly established until we find them almost the embodiment of Roman Baroque. Yet it is significant that this happened in Rome, which was not only the great classical city but also a great Renaissance city. Even if certain pagan aspects of the past were repudiated, it is impossible to believe that there was a renunciation of the whole Renaissance, and that its lessons were forgotten. Its richness, for instance, was not condemned, but used to glorify the Church. The style of its architects and painters was not denounced and their achievements were still there for all to see, and remained a source of inspiration.

The same applied to classical Rome. The Romans in the seventeenth century did not scorn the antique, they took it over. With a self-assurance which may seem slightly shocking to our generation, steeped in archaeology and apt to think that tinkering with antiquities is bordering on sacrilege, the Romans had no hesitation at all in moving columns or treating an antique temple as though it were a stone quarry. If there were any contempt it was only that of familiarity. The beauties of the pagan world were only now being used to the greater glory of God.

Emile Mâle, in his preface to *Eglises de Rome*, has aptly recalled that Bramante said, before drawing up his plans for St Peter's, that he was going to put the dome of the Pantheon on the vaulting of Santa Sophia. No less aptly he remarks that the Renaissance was antiquity enlarged by Christianity. Also, when one recalls that Bernini boasted that his plan for the oval chapel he wished to incorporate in the Louvre would rival the Rotunda, one realizes how strong his admiration for the antique had always remained.

To understand how Rome then became the artistic centre of the world, these underlying factors should be borne in mind, for it was not just a city where beautiful things were made nor one which suddenly needed to be well planned and decorated. It was to be a reservoir of beauty from which Christendom might draw inspiration, and most certainly it did not confine itself to the exposition of any one particular style or artistic school.

Its reputation became such that throughout Europe Rome was the only

place for artists to study. They did not go there either abjectly to model their style on that of Maderna or, later, on that of Bernini, or just to admire the works of Raphael or Michelangelo and copy the pictures of Domenichino. It was to look, to study, and to discover their own individuality that artists flocked to Rome. Everyone passed through: Rubens, Velasquez and Vouet. Poussin and Claude stayed there and both found Rome more agreeable than any other city—proof enough that at this time one might as easily be a classical as a Baroque artist in Rome. Indeed these terms were not used by their contemporaries. There were two schools, both were equally highly thought of, the antique and the modern. The latter was a term that embraced many things from pure Renaissance to the richly elaborate style that was succeeding it.

Even at the beginning of the century there had been signs that this 'modern art' was giving birth to an individual style which reflected contemporary Roman feeling and thought. Even then people in France could describe some monument '*à la romaine*', but no one guessed the latent powers which were so soon to be manifested in the works of Bernini and Borromini. It was of such originality that a new name, Baroque, must be applied to it, and of such vigour that it spread not only throughout Europe, but the world.

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### CHAPTER III

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## *Bernini and Borromini*

THE names of Bernini and Borromini evoke by themselves the whole of High Baroque, and recall as well two of the greatest masters of European art. They were at the same time akin and hostile, though they both worked together at the one task of beautifying Catholic Rome. Nor can they be understood apart from Rome or apart from the Papacy of the seventeenth century. Both were Romans by adoption, for Bernini was by birth Neapolitan, while Borromini came when quite a young man from the north of Italy. But it was the city of Rome that formed them. And Rome had many lessons to teach them—not only those they learnt by working in the studios or studying Roman craftsmanship. Every street of the city, every church or palace, every masterpiece added to the lesson that could only come from the Eternal City with its centuries of history.

Both men were intimately at home in the Roman life of their day, were imbued with the essence of Italian spiritual life, were familiar with the monastic and priestly life, were at home at the Papal Court, and were able, in this one city, to observe and savour a whole world. It was, too, the most varied world of its age, where the most subtle and spiritual values shone amidst the most sordid and mean realities. Here was a way of life that could not be paralleled in any society in Europe and these two artists of superb sensibility and great intelligence were there to enjoy it. The patronage of the Popes, too, was on such a munificent scale that they could give free rein to their genius. Their works were acclaimed as masterpieces throughout the world.

Between 1623 and 1667 three Popes—Urban VIII, who was Pontiff for twenty years, Innocent X and Alexander VII—were all at one in being supremely conscious of the power of the Church of the Counter-Reformation. All of them were resolved, like their predecessors of the Renaissance, to impress the world by the grandeur and beauty of the new buildings in Rome. After their death the succession was more rapid and, instead of there being three Popes elected in forty-four years, five were elected in the last thirty-three years of the century. The longest Pontificate was that of Innocent XI, who reigned for thirteen years. He was not only an austere man, but he was thrifty as well. It was also at this time that the whole atmosphere of Europe changed. Money became scarce and Rome found



its economic straits intensified by the quarrel that broke out between her and France, by the Turkish menace, and by the revolution in England.

Bernini, who had led a life so full of unhampered achievement, died in 1680, which was also a year full of worries for the Papacy. The era of its great hopes and triumphs had coincided with the years of fulfilment of these two very great artists, who both worked together in beautifying Rome. But though they collaborated, they were essentially rivals. This was not merely because one might supersede the other on certain individual works or even because of the competition between them to secure commissions—their rivalry arose from a profound difference in character. Their careers also were very different. They were almost of the same age, Bernini being born at the end of 1598 and Borromini in September 1599. The former, however, found his start in Rome fairly easy, for his father Pietro Bernini had some fame as a sculptor and had been summoned to Rome from Naples. He had first made his name there, although he was by birth a Florentine.

Borromini, on the other hand, found little help from his relative Maderna. In his youth he had worked as a stone-mason in Milan, but even when he was thirty years old he was still only working as an assistant on the sculptures in St Peter's.

Then, though both men had in common a remarkable fertility of invention, there was a great difference of temperament. Bernini had not only exuberant vitality but a galaxy of the most diverse talents; a precocity so great that it is extremely difficult to date his earlier works with any accuracy. And this creative vigour never faltered even in old age and, indeed, remained completely undiminished until his death in 1680. He always felt sure that his real genius lay in painting—and indeed the rapidity with which he worked did seem more fitted to painting than to sculpture or architecture.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately very few of his pictures have come down to us. Those that have survived show great quality; his caricatures also show a remarkable insight into character, and his sketches are admirable [93]. In spite of all this, it is as a sculptor and as an architect that Bernini shows his most profound genius.

Still, one should not lose sight of the homogeneity of an artist's creative thought. One might say that Bernini sculpted and even built like a painter. There is hardly a bust or a sculptured group by him that does not give the impression of restlessness, as though the artist had surprised his subjects in movement and allowed the spectator to follow up the story in his imagination.<sup>2</sup> Take for instance that youthful but already masterly work of his, *Daphne and Apollo*. Hardly ever has the problem of movement been so happily solved in sculpture. The metamorphosis of the nymph seems to be taking place in front of our eyes, her hair and hands turn to leaves and her legs change into bark, and yet there is nothing that seems either far-fetched or ridiculous in the work.

At other times this painter's attitude may be seen in a building, where

Bernini seems to bear in mind the pleasures to be derived from a fine approach, or the shifting view of vistas of the interior, as vividly as he appreciates pure architectural form. Though it would be most unjust to think that Bernini was merely a decorator or a skilful master of illusion it is right to appreciate that perhaps his greatest talent lay in bringing out the picturesque. His art is more fluid than the classical, which tries to achieve the calm of pure balance.

Thanks to the patronage of Urban VIII, who put him in charge of the fabric of St Peter's, Bernini very early on gained a world-wide reputation.

He received orders from foreign courts.<sup>3</sup> Under his direction a whole regiment of pupils and assistants was recruited to do the more technical work and carry out his designs.<sup>4</sup> When he was engaged upon a complicated group of sculpture they were sometimes entrusted with the execution of individual figures, while he himself made up the final composition as he had planned. His life became one incredible round of activity; he might have been living in a bee-hive. This suited his temperament; the activity never overwhelmed him, but seemed to inspire him with new ideas and to make him work ever harder and faster. It is quite clear that this playing of a great role in the public eye pleased him. The visit of the Pope to his studio was so dramatic that it might have been a scene revived from the Renaissance, when Julius II visited Michelangelo. In fact, it did not take him very long to achieve the reputation of being the one and only successor to Michelangelo, or even of being a second Michelangelo. He believed this in all simplicity and with no hint of self-deception.

His exuberance and vitality were so intense that we are not surprised to learn of his constant admiration for women nor to see that his nudes are what one can only describe as voluptuous. To take one example, the portrait-bust of his mistress Constanza Buonarelli is, quite apart from being a masterpiece, dripping in sensuality. This does not mean that at the same time, he could not be profoundly religious and sometimes even pious. He seemed to be able to interpret the most ethereal and spiritual emotions and often appears to be completely at home in expressing them.

Success seemed to be his natural environment and the very air he breathed. Even though he went through the bitter experience of reverse and disgrace, it lasted for quite a short time.

If you look at his day-to-day life you can, it is true, find moments when he appeared to find it unbearable, and became irritable, flying into a temper and wounding even his closest friends. Yet it was characteristic of the man that this never seemed to be held against him for long. He did not have to do anything to excuse himself. No amends were made, but everything was forgiven him because of his innate charm.

When we come to look at the life of Borromini it seems to be almost the exact opposite, except perhaps for the period when he enjoyed the favour of Innocent X and was working at St John Lateran. One always gets the impression, as far as the European scene is concerned, that Bernini

was edging him out of the limelight, so much so that, in his own day, he was scarcely heard of outside Rome. He had neither the showmanship of Bernini nor his exuberance. Though it seems that he was the more subtle genius of the two, no one can deny that he was both melancholy and restless. It is perhaps characteristic that he committed suicide in 1667,<sup>5</sup> while his great rival went on to enjoy thirteen more years full of honours, wealth and fame.

When one comes to judge him there is also much less of his work left than of Bernini's. The churches which he did build—even Sant' Agnese in the Piazza Navona—were never on a large scale and some of them are very small indeed. His patrons were often the monasteries. One might almost say that an atmosphere of intimacy and introspection characterized his work. It was an entirely different world from that in which Bernini lived—very different indeed, though no one would say that he possessed less genius.

Someone has quite justly remarked that Borromini had an affinity with the Gothic. He showed an inventiveness that disregards rules, logic, or even commonsense in his search to discover new forms. The results did manage to give 'a local habitation and a name' to the most intangible and daring flights of the imagination.

He was often reproached by Bernini for ignoring the rules. Blondel also, in his lectures on architecture, accused him of deliberately choosing the opposite of anything that appeared to be rational. It is interesting to quote the very subtle way in which he makes this accusation. 'I would not,' he said, 'like Borromini in Rome, wish to turn bases upside down or volutes inside out nor introduce the thousand other bizarre tricks which spoil the beauty of his buildings. But in spite of all that, those he erected show, for the most part, admirable ingenuity and planning.'<sup>6</sup> The Gothic architects, in their day, wished to give height to their buildings and to flood their churches with light from their great stained glass windows. It needed a very great audacity on their part to decide just how to hollow out the walls. But their knowledge of all the thrusts involved and their skill in introducing buttresses enabled them to create a new architecture which gave all the impression of lightness which they were seeking and at the same time to build as solidly as any of their predecessors.

It was almost in that same spirit that Borromini, who was always more of a technician than a theorist—one might almost call him a law unto himself—went on seeking until he found those answers which appear to be so novel and daring. He refused to relieve the flat surface of walls by superimposing decoration. He relieved it by altering the very structure of the wall itself, and this may be regarded as the most original of his innovations. To do it, one ground plan was superimposed on another, angles and projections were gradually eliminated, and the plan which eventually emerged possessed a sinuous quality which had never been seen before. First there is a length of wall that is concave, then comes one that is convex, and the



effect is both charming and profoundly decorative. Yet the result, like the solution achieved by the Gothic architects, is stable and solid. This use of curved line and undulating movement demonstrated new possibilities in architecture that had never even been suspected before.<sup>7</sup> Added to all this, the play of light between the curves of the walls and the columns gives an ever changing freshness and a surprisingly complex effect to his buildings. Never for a moment do you feel that the decoration would gain from any use of gilt, stucco, or coloured marble. One might say that he was a superb sculptor using architecture as his medium and that he had no need to borrow anything to adorn it.

This same spirit of daring innovation is shown just as much in the cupolas and lanterns which he designed. His ingenuity was such that he even achieved one effect which made a cupola, when seen from outside, appear concave instead of convex. Then he designed a lantern which hardly seems to crown the cupola but rather aspires heavenwards like the most soaring of steeples—which he achieved in the spiral which surmounts La Sapienza [47]. His audacity was much greater than Bernini's. A pure ellipse or oval is not enough for him. The interplay of line seems to dissolve the spaces and lend an extraordinary value to every single detail involved, though he always kept them subordinate to the main plan.

This novel freedom of expression which he achieved and the ingenuities of which he was a past master might well have led to mere extravaganzas. This was indeed what the classicists and doctrinaires called them. But his achievement was to create buildings imbued with an astonishing and graceful charm, delicate yet full of profound feeling. Without doubt it is a sophisticated art—an aristocratic art, if you will—since he seemed resolved never to follow the beaten track. Yet nobody could deny that it was sincere, and the fantastic elements of it had a quality so magical that they ended by enchanting not only the Roman *cognoscenti* but even the simple-minded visitor from abroad. Borromini, who was so often misunderstood and the storm centre of criticism during his lifetime, has more than triumphed since his death.

There were historical reasons why this fame should come so belatedly, but there were also other causes which were purely aesthetic and religious. Entering a building by Borromini is like travelling to an entirely new and strange land. They might almost, because of their dream-like quality, be called paradisiacal. It might possibly be said they lack those supreme qualities which are said to make a masterpiece universally valid, irrespective of time or circumstance. But is not this very universality perhaps a fantasy of theorists? It certainly cannot stop us recognizing the unique poetry which Borromini has managed to capture.

At the beginning of their careers both men worked together on the building of St Peter's under Maderna, who died in 1629. Borromini was working on the sculptures, but Bernini had already won a reputation as archi-

tect, sculptor and painter, and had during the short pontificate of Gregory XV (1621-23) been granted the title of 'il Cavaliere'. It was on him that the mantle of Maderna descended.

Roman art at that time seemed half inclined to look back to the classical. With Bernini there was a curious ambivalence in his work, that enabled him to swing from the pagan and Florentine sensuality of his mythological groups (*Daphne and Apollo*, *The Rape of Proserpine*) to the classic grace of his statue of Matilda of Tuscany; or from the realism of his busts (Cardinal Scipio Borghese [37], Pope Gregory XV and Urban VIII [59]) to the sinuous and ingenious designs of his fountains (e.g. *The Triton* [38]). To succeed in such differing fields is without doubt the sign of great talent, but was it not perhaps the exhibition of a virtuoso capable of playing many instruments, rather than the hallmark of a genius?

At last St Peter's offered him the chance of showing that he could create a masterpiece. This was the baldacchino, begun in 1625 and finished in 1633 [39]. In the centre of the cathedral beneath the cupola there was a huge empty space—a yawning gap. The great dimensions of St Peter's made the furnishings an architectural undertaking rather than works of simple decoration. Anyone who had the temerity to construct anything there must also be aware, as Maderna had learnt when he built the nave and the façade, that they were entering into competition with Bramante and Michelangelo—those two great predecessors who had conceived the cathedral. Bernini at that time was not yet thirty years old, yet his solution of the problem was that of a mature genius.

Antonio Munoz has pointed out that this lay in discarding any idea of continuing the traditional use of a ciborium. Instead, something completely novel must take its place. Bernini chose a baldacchino, that little canopy of flimsy stuffs which was used to shelter the Holy Sacrament when it was carried in procession. This he enlarged to the size of a colossal monument. It had until then been an affair of wood and tapestry or silk, but he rendered it in bronze, so that he turned something provisory and mobile into something stable, strong and gigantic, and finally united two qualities which might seem irreconcilable—lightness and hugeness—without impairing either. It had to be huge, because it must fill the transept crossing, and light because it must not obscure the apse nor break any vista. Bernini's solution is daringly modern, and as functional as it is decorative.

The baldacchino rests on four great marble blocks on which the bees of the Barberini coat of arms are carved in relief.<sup>8</sup> From these rise four twisted bronze columns crowned with Corinthian capitals, which in turn support a light frame enriched by a large tasselled curtain, and thence springs the final motif of reversed volutes soaring toward the dome and surmounted by a cross. Between these graceful lines, which seem to capture the air and light, one can see the great curve of the dome. Then, at the four corners of the entablature stand statues of angels, their wings and their

draperies ruffled by the wind. They strike a more solemn note or, rather, establish the equilibrium of the whole. The baldacchino was at once acknowledged as an essential part of the basilica as surely as though it had been part of the original design.

It harmonizes with the dome and the general ensemble, yet it exists in its own right. It is one of the most felicitous expressions of contemporary religious ideas, combining the glorification of the Holy Sacrament with the liturgical pomp of processions.

In order to find enough bronze for the baldacchino, there was no hesitation in stripping the roof of the Pantheon. '*Quod non fecerunt Barbari, fecerunt Barberini*' was a quip which, with its cruel pun upon Pope Urban VIII's family name, became immediately popular. But this sudden and startling transmutation of antique bronze certainly robbed Rome of no masterpiece. The design of the twisted columns of the baldacchino at St Peter's was to be copied in so very many other works that they might appear to be an original and distinctive element of the Baroque style. In fact, they were copied from the antique, and both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance had made use of them. Yet in this case, their use had the great advantage over straight columns that they introduced a sense of movement and avoided the gross effect of sheer mass which rigid lines might have given. This new monument was insinuated into the basilica, not brutally imposed, and it was the fame of the baldacchino that explains the popularity of twisted pillars in the following years. It is impossible to find out the part which Borromini played, either as executant or as Bernini's assistant, in the construction of this monument. With the baldacchino Bernini brought, as it were, an offering from the new generation to the great basilica that had been in process of construction for a century and a half, and showed that he could enter into the spirit of the church, and the ideas of Michelangelo.

Urban VIII asked him to continue his work there. This time it was to decorate the great pillars which support the dome. Leaving them bare amidst the fluted pilasters would not in any way have detracted from their majestic power, but contemporary taste was not satisfied with this. Those plain, unadorned surfaces, which in Florentine art might possess a discreet charm (though possibly an astringent one) were here considered by their vast dimensions to give an impression of frigidity and dourness and it was further argued that Michelangelo himself had enlivened the walls of the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo with niches.

Bernini transformed these pillars into shrines: below, a vast niche in which one could place a statue no less than five metres high, and above, a ceremonial balcony decorated with twisted columns and a concave pediment. Here images or relics of the saints could be shown to the populace on appropriate feast days. Bernini was trying not only to lighten the great blocks of the pillars, but also to bring them, by means of these balconies from which the relics were shown, into close harmony with the pulpit



48 from which the Holy Father gave his blessing. In both cases he was successful. He used the pillars which surrounded the baldachino and the High Altar over the Tomb of St Peter, to sing, as it were, a hymn of the Passion, by recalling its sacred relics.

The statues chosen for the niches, as well as the reliefs which adorned the loggias, recalled the history of the Church. On the pillars to the east are two statues of women. The first is of St Veronica, who wiped the sweat, blood, and spittle from Christ's face on his way to Calvary, whereupon her handkerchief miraculously showed His adored features [41]. Mocchi has represented her as running towards Christ under the Cross and unfolding her napkin in a gesture of mercy.<sup>9</sup> The other is of the Empress Helena (the statue is by Bolgi) who sought for and found the Cross upon which Our Saviour died [43]. Since then innumerable fragments have been distributed throughout the world as relics of the True Cross.

On the pillars opposite there is a statue of St Longinus [40] which was carved by Bernini himself. It depicts the Roman soldier who pierced the side of the dead Christ and drew forth blood from that divine heart, and also some drops of water that seemed like tears.<sup>10</sup> In a wonderful gesture, St Longinus holds out his arms, and in his left hand is the lance, yet that instrument of the last outrage against Our Lord seems to have become a symbol of pity and love. The fourth pillar is dedicated to St Andrew, who like Christ and St Peter, died on a cross (the statue is by Duquesnoy) [42]. Though the head of St Andrew is, like the napkin of St Veronica, the lance of St Longinus and the True Cross, preserved in St Peter's and thus may justify the homage given to this apostle, it cannot be denied that one other relic of the Passion should have been recalled, but the crown of thorns is not among the treasures of Rome. Saint Louis recovered it and deposited it in Paris, where La Sainte Chapelle—that reliquary of stone—was enlarged to receive it. Nevertheless, had it been possible to place a statue of St Louis there, a King of France facing the Empress Helena, the impression would have been greater, for both the elation of medieval belief and the splendour of the Catholic nations which vied with the ancient Roman Empire would have thereby been enhanced, and the cycle of relics have been more admirably rounded off.

By designing the baldacchino, and by his decoration of the pillars, Bernini gave expression to the Catholic belief of his time no less surely than the builders of the medieval cathedrals had done before him. Nothing can be more disconcerting than the stupidity of critics or the negative reactions of foreign Catholics (especially the French) when faced with this great conception so imbued with profound religious thought and feeling. If living Christianity must in every era be aware of the contemporary scene, the inspiration of Bernini cannot be considered irreligious, since religion then was palpable and not averse to display. He was a true interpreter of a faith that had reaffirmed its doctrinal authority and was sure both of its power and ability to spread its message. His art,

heir to the Renaissance, expressed this new assurance most nobly in the very heart of Christendom, and even in the basilica designed by Michelangelo himself, Bernini's Baroque works left the indelible imprint of the seventeenth century.

Another of Bernini's undertakings had a less happy outcome. Maderna had envisaged two campaniles above the vestibules of his façade, partly to counteract its emphatic horizontal line, and he had left plans for them. But, when the Pope suggested they should be erected, Bernini submitted other designs, which were duly approved. For reasons of economy, only one campanile was built. Though considered in itself it was graceful enough, with its two storeys of columns, it introduced a disturbing element and spoilt both the effect of the façade and of the dome. On Urban VIII's death, the defects of the campanile itself and also the muddle in the expense accounts connected with it were used as excuses to demolish it.<sup>11</sup> It had added nothing to Bernini's fame; indeed it caused his fall from favour.

As always, a new Pope meant a new distribution of offices and of favours. The patronage which the new Pope, Innocent X, withdrew from Bernini was, for a short while, given to Borromini.

But now one must turn back to the time when the two rivals were both at work on the same secular building and study some of the individual achievements of Borromini.

Before he became Pope Urban VIII, Cardinal Barberini had asked Maderna to build him a palace in Rome. The work was far advanced by the time of Maderna's death. Then Bernini and Borromini received orders to complete it and permission to alter the original plan as they thought fit. It is difficult to determine exactly what each architect contributed to the new building. At any rate, the main block and the façade which faces the city are attributed to Bernini. Three orders of loggias superimposed, each including seven arcades, make a harmonious composition in the Palladian style for the front of the court of honour, which is contained by wings at right angles. This elegant classicism is, however, nothing but decoration which has little correspondence with the interior plan of the palace, though it disguises it very cleverly. Let us remember that during these years Bernini was much engaged in mounting theatrical shows or fêtes; he was a master of surprise effects and ingenious contraptions, and perhaps it was his facility of invention that led him, in the Barberini palace, to adopt a plan that was more ingenious than rational.

The main front block consists only of galleries. On the ground level the seven archways open into a courtyard that looks triangular. It is traversed by two screens, the first consisting of five, the second of three arches, and leads up to the great oval hall designed for receptions and fêtes. Rooms are grouped at the sides of the courtyard with little care for symmetry. For example in the right-hand corner there is a grand oval staircase, the state rooms or living rooms do not correspond, and the disparity is even

50 greater in the wings. The garden front gives no hint of the oval hall. This is enclosed by a great Palladian terrace front with engaged columns and Ionic pilasters. The exterior of the palace is something quite different from the arrangement of the interior: from outside no one could suspect anything intricate or unusual in the rooms. A semblance of regularity is given, though the palace is anything but regular.

Bernini's taste was a curious mixture of classical inspiration and an ingenuity peculiar to himself, which appears frequently in all his architectural work. Later on, he reverted in the Palazzo Chigi-Odescalchi to a more traditional arrangement, but his predilection for oval halls and the loggia remains. One can always detect in Bernini's buildings an urge to raise difficulties for the pleasure of solving them—the satisfaction of a virtuoso who is determined to show off all his cleverness, and because of this he is Baroque, and the great master of Baroque.

Nevertheless it remains true that he achieved his effects without fundamentally breaking with the traditions of the Roman Renaissance. He admired its regular and rhythmic majesty. From it he borrowed, when designing his windows and doors, the triangular or semicircular motif, as well as the beautiful deep-cut arcature. He could understand both Bramante and Michelangelo.

When one looks at the windows designed by Borromini for this palace the contrast is striking. Their ornamentation of festoons, shells, and the curved lines all show a refined Mannerism which is completely independent of tradition and has its inspiration elsewhere. Bernini practises his variations within the scale of the great Classic and Palladian mode; Borromini will not be bound in the slightest degree by those rules, though they must have influenced his art, since his taste was formed under the influence of Michelangelo. But he wished to break free from this, almost to oppose it, and because of this Borromini stands out as the most individual artist of his age.

Two things characterize his architectural work: the use of the curved line, and the extensive interplay of these curved lines—such a living relationship between decoration and the deployment of mass and space that scarcely one detail could be altered without damaging the whole.<sup>12</sup> The first work which displays his genius is San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane (1638-41) sometimes called San Carlino. It is a very small monastic church, but in spite of the cramped space, he succeeds in creating marvellous effects of great delicacy and serenity [44].

The sixteen Corinthian columns, which lead from the porch up to the curved altar, are so placed that the nave is contained by them in an ellipse; they have a rhythm and life which seem as natural and unforced as the beating of a heart [45]. It is such a perfect triumph of Baroque that one would hardly expect that the artist who created it could ever work on a larger scale without this quality being lost. Nevertheless it would be unjust to think of Borromini as a miniaturist. He was first and foremost an archi-



tect though his delicacy and exquisite sensibility were out of step with the contemporary fashion which demanded things on a heroic scale. Still, even before completing the interior of San Carlino—and very much before the façade which had to wait thirty years before it was erected—Borromini received a commission for the Oratory of San Filippo Neri which practically adjoined the Chiesa Nuova—a work which was distinctly Counter-Reformation [46]. For the monastery he used the two-storey elevation that was the usual treatment of a great many churches then being built in Rome, but his daring handling of this made it something new. The two storeys are incurved and so is the three-cusped balcony pediment which crowns the façade. The centre of the lower order bulges out as though it might be a small tower, so much so that the whole character of this storey is dominated by the contrast of convex and concave. It is an innovation in architectural decoration, and indeed the foundation of a new tradition. From now on the richness of a building no longer depended upon the ornaments that might be stuck on its walls nor even upon the grandeur of its columns, but upon the interplay of masses and contrasting lines.

One gets not so much a sense of fluid movement—though this is always present in the exquisite Italian light—as a feeling of one manual of an organ responding to another, the chant in stone of strophe and antistrophe. The founder of the Oratorians had wished his order to rejoice—*Gaudete semper*—and this façade is indeed a hymn to joy. In Rome, which was so preoccupied with the grandiose and the triumphant, it stands for an inward happiness and lightheartedness. It was a surprising thing to proclaim at this date, yet these qualities were to remain, no less than its tragic and tormented aspects, an essential element of Baroque.

Already, when working under Bernini, he had come into conflict with him. Now their two styles became so markedly different that it is scarcely possible to praise the one without criticizing the other. It is true that both derive from Michelangelo, but since they followed divergent roads it is easy to forget this fact. Since Bernini was out of favour with the new Pontiff, he looked for a rival to replace him, and Borromini was the natural choice.

Innocent X, a Pamphili who was an ambitious and self-willed man, intended to leave his mark on the rebuilding and beautifying of Rome no less certainly than his predecessors had done.

They had favoured St Peter's and neglected St John Lateran to such an extent that they had almost robbed the ancient basilica of its dignity as a cathedral. It pleased the new Pope to restore the honour due to it, and the approaching Jubilee of 1650 gave an excuse. St John Lateran should be redecorated in the contemporary style, and Innocent X called upon Borromini to do it. This decoration of St John Lateran was a glorious stage in the architect's career, but one wonders if it is his most beautiful work. Some fairly recent work, such as the sixteenth century frescoes, he was told to destroy. Other parts of the basilica, including Michelangelo's

52 ceiling of the apostles, he was forbidden to touch. Borromini, who had no liking for applied bronze or gilt ornamentation, confined himself to introducing eloquent niceties into the robust grandeur of the old basilica. However flawless the tall fluted pilasters which he used to enclose the pillars may be, however pure those reliefs in white marble placed beneath the coloured marble niches that contain gigantic statues of the apostles, there is something in his work that is out of harmony with the character of the building [48]. One feels a gap of too many generations between the main architecture of St John Lateran and Borromini's decorations while in St Peter's, the Baroque of Bernini seems a natural development from the Renaissance. It was indeed a risk to ask Borromini to adapt himself to an already established architectural frame instead of giving his imagination full rein. But at least in the aisles there is one of the most charming pieces of decoration he ever executed. The figures of cherubim above the arches remind one of birds in their nests settling to roost. It is a motif of great nicety, just slightly rounding the point where the straight lines intersect, and one which, repeated from bay to bay, adds a note of unity and graciousness to the whole [49].

Innocent X wished his pontifical glory to be linked with that of St John Lateran, but his family pride as a Pamphili was bound up with the reconstruction of the church of Sant' Agnese in the Piazza Navona, which was only a few steps away from their palace and had therefore become the family chapel. A whole series of architects had been employed on this work: first came the Rainaldi, Girolamo and his son Carlo, who were there till 1653, and then Borromini became director of works for four years, until he was supplanted by a committee of five architects.

It is now agreed that the general plan of the church, though not the rich and sumptuous decoration, is due to Borromini. The plan is that of a Greek cross, though the chapels which are placed between the arms of the cross give it the appearance of a rotunda. Magnificent Corinthian columns and fluted pilasters support the arches and pendentives on which the dome rests. In the reredos of the high altar and in the concave niches which house the side altars there are great reliefs in marble [51]. The façade is one of the most beautiful in Rome [50]. It curves inwards between two flanks which are surmounted by the loggias of the campaniles, both of which are topped with little steeples fashioned like Chinese caps. The vivacity and lightness of the campaniles contrast yet harmonize perfectly with the fullness of the oval dome resting on its drum, which is pierced with high windows. The balance of the whole achieves a majestic calm. Some echoes from the façade of St Peter's can also be detected here, though transposed in a minor key: the colonnaded porch and the lower order which decorates the entrance to the church. A joke, current at the time, said that the figure of the Nile, in Bernini's admirable fountain in front of the church, was covering his face to avoid the very sight of Borromini's work. Some people have even taken this quip seriously though there is less than nothing to

back it up, for Bernini's fountain is earlier than Borromini's church [63]. Bernini was, in fact, far from belittling his rival's success. He studied it and drew inspiration from it when he prepared the plans for Sant' Andrea al Quirinale which he built for the Jesuit novices in 1658. The plan of this building is an ellipse in which the entrance and the High Altar face each other across the short axis. The façade consists of a tall portico with polished pilasters and a triangular pediment. These severe lines frame the archivolt, but slightly in front two pillars are placed diagonally under a decorated baldacchino to make, as it were, a peristyle. The whole is very simple yet very sophisticated. There are no violent contrasts, but every nuance obtains its maximum effect [52].

As you approach, your attention is drawn to the peristyle and, almost without noticing it, you pause a moment before leaving the street to enter the church. Then, once over the threshold, one glance takes in the whole design:<sup>13</sup> the fluted pilasters which separate the arches of the eight chapels built into the thickness of the wall, and the main chapel facing you in all its sombre magnificence. In front of it are four composite columns, slightly projected. The pediment above the architrave is incurved and hollowed out to give room for a statue of St Andrew in glory [53].

From an unseen cupola light floods the altar itself, which is framed by gilded rays and angels. The church is entirely roofed by the coffered and strongly ribbed cupola, pierced by windows at its base. The deep colouring of the background is relieved by the white figures of angels and cherubs, as light and graceful as flower petals.

It is a perfect achievement, full of delicacy and exquisite detail, and to a certain extent, this church of Bernini's shows an unmistakable affinity with Borromini's taste, but not too much emphasis should be laid on this. With its sumptuous yet sophisticated decoration and its combination of the rational and functional, Sant' Andrea has a classical quality.

A chapel for novitiates is perhaps more of an oratory than a church and must fulfil certain conditions. It need not be big, for there is no large congregation to accommodate, but the novices will come there several times a day to contemplate the Blessed Sacrament. The church must be definitely articulated: on both sides of the altar under a small tribune—a favourite device of *modo nostro*—there are doors to facilitate the comings and goings of the levites, and enable them to carry out their daily duties with dignity. The side altars make it possible to celebrate several masses simultaneously, and thus give the Fathers more time for their other daily tasks. It is, in fact, a church where all the elements of the design have been subordinated to its general usefulness, and one also that combines magnificence of decoration with harmony of proportion.

Sant' Andrea al Quirinale shows us, as clearly as any building in Rome, that the Baroque and the classical are not two incompatible styles: the richness of the one and the balance of the other have here combined to give the best solution of utilizing a given space and fulfilling various func-



tional needs. It would be difficult to find a more accomplished work of art than this small chapel, and Bernini himself was fully aware of the greatness of his achievement. In his last years he revisited it in preference to any other of his buildings. He used to say that he had a particularly soft spot for it in his heart, that looking at it banished his weariness and made up for all the sorrows of his life.<sup>14</sup>

For any Pope who wished as passionately as Innocent X did, that his pontificate should be renowned and glorious, it was hardly possible to leave Bernini in retirement. So *il Cavaliere* was asked to resume the work at St Peter's that had been suspended, and henceforward carried it out without interruption.

First of all he undertook the decoration of the transepts, where his very ingenious use of perspective accentuates the depth, and his use of coloured marble columns with an abundance of statuary adds to the richness of the cathedral.

Later, under Alexander VII, Bernini was called upon to solve two problems which were very much more complex: how to decorate the apse, and how to plan the square in front of the basilica. The first of these problems called forth all the talents he possessed as decorator, sculptor and architect. The dimensions of the apse called for a work as high as the baldacchino, and for something which, though quite different, would not clash with it.

This time, it was not a question of filling an empty space, but of decorating a wall—and the decoration, to succeed, had to be of gigantic proportions. Alexander VII wished, too, that it should not only express the universal authority of the Roman Catholic church, but should also be a memorial to St Peter. Tradition had it that a chair, still preserved in the cathedral, was one which the Apostle himself had used at the earliest Christian assemblies. To present this to the veneration of the faithful as a symbol of doctrinal authority would be but an extension of the cult of relics which had already inspired Bernini when he decorated the pillars which surround the baldacchino.

He decided to place this old seat in a reliquary shaped like an armchair [54], which would be supported by gigantic figures of the Fathers of the church, and the size of these figures had obviously to correspond to those of the statues in the niches of the main pillars. The reliquary itself must be large enough to be visible from the nave, whence it would have to be seen through the columns of the baldacchino, yet it must not be too heavy, lest it made the supporting figures of the bishops look ridiculous. It would hardly have been becoming to present the Fathers of the church in the attitudes of Michelangelo's slaves or as Atlases bearing intolerable burdens. These two conditions made it imperative that the main design was not too high, yet this, in its turn, left another problem—that of filling up the space between it and the vault [55].

Bernini's genius was equal to the task. The cathedra forms a harmonious

unity, but it is built up from two elements which are quite distinct. At the base there is a scene of pomp, which is definitely secular. In the foreground are the Fathers of the Roman church with their tall mitres, and in the background the Greek Fathers, bareheaded. They seem to be standing by, rather than supporting the reliquary, which is of meticulous and elaborate goldsmith work. Here amongst innumerable details, the angels and cherubs bearing the keys of St Peter and the papal tiara are outstanding. The upper half of the composition is, by contrast, a vision of Heaven—a glory of clouds and golden rays surrounding a circular window that lets in the daylight as if the sun itself were part of the composition, and in the centre of the window is the Dove of the Holy Ghost. This astonishing creation in stucco is one of the most daring works ever achieved by Roman Baroque. One might almost imagine that the angels of Correggio's *Assumption* had suddenly taken on form and body and after a headlong flight from their dome in Parma had settled down in St Peter's. 'There is no more extraordinary composition in the whole of sculpture,' Marcel Reymond says, 'nor any conception more daring, more difficult to execute or one more wholly successful.'<sup>15</sup>

To master all the problems of height, space and depth, and to weld the unavoidably diverse elements into an entity, called for great powers of imagination and a supreme mastery of technique. How could light gracefulness be combined with colossal size? Such a thing would have been impossible in a static monument and the solution could only be found in movement. Everything appears to be in motion: the statues at the base appear to be moving towards the nave, and above we see angels whose wings, whose faces with half-open lips, whose very garments seem to palpitate with astonishing life. Instead of looking at a monument, one finds one is watching a drama; any sense of heaviness or weight has disappeared.

It has been said that this composition is a hymn to light; it might equally well be said that the whole of the cathedra is a poem to the Spirit. The Holy Ghost, whose symbol we see in the centre of the window is the dominating principle of the whole work. Those angels, pure spirits, have half assumed earthly form to enable us to apprehend them. From that chair the Prince of Apostles has proclaimed the message of the Redemption. The inspired Fathers of the Church that support it have defined and clarified its teachings.

How admirably Bernini has exploited to the full every quality of the materials he used—the solidity and deep colour of the gilded bronze contrasting with the fragility and whiteness of the stucco work. The lower half of the cathedra representing the world of reality and history—the Fathers of the Church and the reliquary—is given a more substantial tangibility and its majestic presence made more imposing, while the brightness and lightness of the glory, with its angels and clouds, radiate some ethereal and elusive quality. One cannot do justice to this work if one fails to

56 appreciate these plastic qualities, but equally one cannot do it justice unless one recognizes how deeply it is inspired by a fervent spirituality.

Yet two objections remain to be answered: one concerns the artistic method, the other the religious approach. No one can possibly fail to appreciate or underestimate the greatness of the conception, which fully justifies contemporary comparisons of Bernini with Michelangelo. But the means employed to realize it are none the less theatrical. The glory is a piece of decoration stuck on the wall, a theatrical scene—though undoubtedly a marvellous one—in which *trompe l'oeil* and tricks of perspective are freely used. There is also a sort of cleverness, a '*fate presto*', a scintillating dash about it which some people may find repellent. They condemn it on principle, maintaining that sheer technical virtuosity has been used to cover up but not fundamentally to resolve the spatial problems involved.

The conflict between the classical and Baroque points of view is raised once again. A historian who studies this period can only acknowledge that this exists and that all attempts to prove one attitude superior to the other are futile. The cathedra, like all the great religious Baroque works of art, could not have been conceived had there not been the artistic heritage of the Renaissance to draw upon and the doctrines of the Council of Trent to inspire it. There can be no doubt that it is an expression of the particular atmosphere of religious feeling in Rome that then reigned. Even if Bernini himself were no mystic, he had a profound knowledge of what mysticism could mean. His religious sensibility and imagination were equally susceptible to the almost feminine gentleness of angels, eternally young and ever singing praises of God, and to the majestic ideal of the church's mission. That he was a devout Christian there can be no doubt, but 'in my Father's house are many mansions', and Bernini did not inhabit a penitent's cell. He loved the wondrous and magnificent, and it was wonder and magnificence that he embodied, with all the technical mastery of a great artist, in his Cathedra Petri.

The work may alienate and make an almost hermetic impression on some who, moved perhaps by rationalist philosophy, or a taste for intellectual form, by their inclination for a religion of rigorous penitence, or ideals of social welfare, see nothing to like and much to condemn in the exuberant richness and spectacular effect which confronts them.<sup>16</sup> Because of that, the Baroque of the cathedra may perhaps be considered to be too closely allied with one especial interpretation of religion and the Church for it to inspire all the faithful with that unreserved admiration which is the hall mark of the greatest masterpieces. But to a great many it gives complete satisfaction aesthetically, spiritually and emotionally. Above all it displays a religious intensity which only wilful blindness can ignore, and it is the most orthodox homage to the teaching of the church ever executed by a Christian artist.

One thing remained to complete the basilica and that was to lay out the



great piazza in front. Bernini rejected the idea of building palaces round it and decided to enclose it by a purely decorative work on a vast scale. It was planned as an ellipse, a gallery supported by four rows of columns. The three colonnades would be used by carriages or pedestrians to approach the church. Here once more a theatrical device is pressed into the service of a religious idea [56 & 57].

The church of pilgrimage, the very form of which was a prayer, had not only to arouse joy in the hearts of pilgrims after their long journey but also call forth some sense of pilgrimage in the heart of a Roman passing it by every day. It would not be enough merely to give it a good setting as the termination of yet another vista in the city, as though it were a fine monument or some church. It was more than that, it was St Peter's, and in some way it must stand apart. That might have been achieved by buildings that enhanced its beauty and stressed its unique character.

In constructing the colonnades Bernini also sought to counteract some disturbing characteristics of the façade, and he succeeded in making it appear taller, and more compact, by contrast with the greater breadth and lower height of the colonnade. The idea was undeniably right, though it shows Bernini more as an inspired decorator than as an architect.

We have already seen how the Renaissance architects favoured free standing spaces ordered logically and rationally, while the architects of the Baroque sought for movement and surprise.

The chief purpose of the colonnade was of course to give shape to the piazza and shut out adjacent buildings, but in planning it Bernini certainly had the desire to erect a formidable barrier to shut in the basilica. By following the colonnade the pilgrims were merely being shown the best way to approach the church. In the original design it was to spread out on both sides from the entrance to St Peter's but at the far end, exactly facing the main door it was to have been broken by a feature resembling a small triumphal arch. There would thus have been three elements of the colonnade. As one walked round it, the views of the basilica would have been more varied than those glimpses we get of it today framed by the columns, and through having been partly hidden until the visitor had actually entered the colonnade, the church would have appeared even larger and more impressive. The colonnade is, as we see, interrupted, but the triumphal arch was never built, and where it should have been there remains just an empty space.

Also, the present day town-planners, by pulling down the Borgo and driving the broad avenue of the Via della Conciliazione through it, have quite changed Bernini's conception. Now the piazza is opened up and visible from across the river. It is a quite different conception, but one which nevertheless has found some arguments in its favour. From afar the colonnade gives an impression of opening its arms in a gesture of welcome to the pilgrims, and the long vista is successful in its aim of giving an added impression of height to the basilica. But the effect of surprise and wonder

which Bernini aimed at has been weakened, in fact, destroyed. Long before reaching it, everyone knows what St Peter's looks like.

Sculpture at this time was closely linked with Roman Baroque architecture, imbued with the same spirit and capable of producing works just as impressive. The cult of the dead had received new encouragement after the Council of Trent; this was nothing very new, for it echoed the taste of the late Middle Ages and carried on the Renaissance predilection for cenotaphs. The result was that this became an age of great tombs, designed not only to commemorate the greatness of the deceased, but also to expound the lessons of their lives.

In Rome, whether it was due to conviction or merely to pious usage, great attention was paid to the erection of a tomb worthy of a Pope and his Pontificate. Sometimes the Pope himself, having perhaps no great confidence in the piety of those who might survive him, preferred to order his sepulchre in his lifetime. Such was the case with Urban VIII, who naturally turned to Bernini to design it [59]. Twenty-five years later, in 1667, it was again Bernini who was chosen to design the tomb of Alexander VII [60]. The two great monuments show yet another facet of Bernini's style in the decoration of St Peter's. Both rank amongst the most expressive works of Baroque art, and what is most interesting, they allow us to see how, over the period of a quarter of a century, it had evolved and progressed, for in both tombs the theme is the same.

In both cases the Pope is depicted as surprised by death, a theme to remind both priest and layman of this stern and inexorable lesson of mortality. The statues of the virtues for which the Pope had been renowned are also not only a tribute to his memory, but gravely call to mind that they alone will carry weight in the hour when the dead man faces the Supreme Judge. The scene is the same, but it has gained in dramatic power, if we compare the tomb of Alexander VII with that of Urban VIII. The latter was designed for a niche which directly faced the tomb of Paul III, the Pope of the Trentine Council, which had been executed, seventy years earlier, by Guglielmo della Porta in the tradition of Michelangelo, and the necessity of balancing this composition had to be borne in mind. Bernini decided therefore to repeat its general pyramidal form: a figure of the Pope, seated, forms the apex, and beneath, the sarcophagus is flanked by the Virtues, standing.

Yet even in this design Bernini's Baroque tendencies are very evident and contrast with the serenity and static quality of the Renaissance tomb. The statue of the Pope, cast in bronze, rises from a great marble plinth. The right arm is raised and the hand spread in a gesture of benediction to the world. At this very moment a skeleton, wrought in gilded bronze, creeps forth from the black marble sarcophagus in front of the plinth, to write down the name Urbanus VIII—the summons that none can gainsay. Even the proportions of the tomb are eloquent with meaning, for in that small narrow space, till the end of time, must lie the Pontiff who but now

was ruler of the whole Catholic world. The great statues of the virtues are carved in white marble and clad in long robes. Justice, leaning with one arm on the tomb looks up at the Pope with grave sadness. Charity, holding a sleeping child in her arms, turns with an air of gentleness, almost with a smile of consolation, to comfort another child by her side who is stamping in a fit of uncontrollable grief.<sup>17</sup>

The scenic character of this composition, built up from three elements—the Papal Benediction, the call of death, and the mourning of the Virtues for the dead Pope—as well as the way it reanimates but does not abandon the traditions of the Renaissance, makes it the archetype of Baroque tombs.<sup>18</sup>

Antonio Munoz says: 'It is the new form of a pontifical mausoleum, and one which was to persist till the time of Canova: it is no longer an architectural composition, but a throne surrounded with figures: no longer a sarcophagus, but a catafalque.'<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, there is much restraint about it: it is moving, not sentimentally pathetic, the expressions are calm, and passion is only shown by the child at the corner of the monument, and the whole work, however *mouvementé*, gives an impression of sadness combined with Christian hope. If one compares this with the tomb which Girardon built for Richelieu in the chapel of the Sorbonne, there is no great difference of stress to be seen.<sup>20</sup>

For the tomb of Alexander VII Bernini again took the figures he had used for the tomb of Urban VIII, but now he gave free rein to his imagination and they are realized with a greater intensity: it is one of the most poignant funereal works of modern sculpture. This drama of Life and Death is concentrated in one supreme and tragic moment. The Pope is humbly kneeling on a hassock at his prayers. The tiara, half obscured by his robes, is placed on the ground at his side. The plinth, a small rounded dais, itself rests upon a great piece of drapery fashioned of red marble. But from the tomb beneath, a crypt with doors of bronze, there springs up in one violent leap, the Angel of Death, clutching at the drapery. It looks as though everything will be wrenched down and the Pope himself, in the very act of prayer, will be somersaulted head first down to the dread gates below. Charity, though hindered by the heaviness of the child in her arms, rushes forward anxious lest she be too late. Truth, slightly further away, clasps her hands to her breast in fright and recoils as she sees the gaping tomb. We see a moment of pure drama, but can one say that it is a work devoid of all Christian feeling? How, indeed, could it be else? It was created in the years 1672-78, when Bernini was at the height of his powers, when his religious faith waxed ever more ardent, the nearer he approached his mortal end. Does not the very serenity of the Pope at prayer, oblivious to all that goes on around him, give the one answer that a Christian can make to the seeming horror that awaits him? If he steadfastly refuses to cast his eyes down to look on a scene that would make the blood run cold, is that not because he has already seen some ray of light which fills him with



60 hope? It is not irrelevant to recall that Alexander VII was an extremely pious man and that, even when as Papal Nuncio he had to mix in the great world and fashionable life, he continued to wear a hair shirt.

The untroubled figure of the Pope, confronting death with the serenity of prayer is the lesson which the ageing artist wished to convey, the hope of peace which must be striven for and the recognition of the abyss of horror into which one can slide. The work may be very Baroque, very Italian, and very theatrical, but here there is no rhodomontade: it is a vehement statement of deep spiritual values.

Chronologically there are two other pieces of sculpture to be considered between the erection of these two papal tombs, and they are amongst the most expressive of Bernini's work. One of them—*The Ecstasy of St Teresa*—has aroused as much criticism as praise, but is universally acknowledged as the supreme example of Baroque statuary [61].

The other, *Truth Unveiled by Time*, is less well known, and was carved by Bernini in 1646, when he had fallen from favour. There had already been several nudes amongst his works but these had shown an affinity with the Florentine school. Now he broke with that graceful tradition. This time he envisaged a woman as solidly built and generously proportioned as any goddess portrayed by Rubens. Freed from the sheet which covered her, she awakens in the light. It is an allegory of the hopes of rehabilitation felt by those fallen into disgrace. But of Time, in his usual role of an old man armed with a scythe, there is no trace. The sheet has been snatched away and is held high by invisible hands. One has the impression that this work has deliberately been left unfinished; it possesses all the vigour of a sketch, and a stress on planes rather than delicacy of line which sets it apart from its age and, to our eyes, seems almost to anticipate Rodin.

And *The Ecstasy* . . . how many visitors must have seen it since it was placed, three centuries ago, in the transept of Santa Maria della Vittoria, and how many controversies it has led to! It is well known that President de Brosses, when he saw it, was only reminded of a bedroom scene and even in our day there are some, of great sensibility, who can see in it nothing more than the expression of profane emotion.

Emile Mâle has defended the purity of the intentions of the artist, 'who wished to glorify what purity itself had experienced', and he reminds us that this depiction of an agonized swoon is drawn from descriptions of her ecstasies given by St Teresa herself. If one remembers the date of this monument and realizes that at that time Bernini was subject to every possible malevolent attack, one can only suppose that he was cautious enough not to show this work to the public before he had consulted his friends as to whether it was unexceptionable from an orthodox point of view. There can be no question of the work being equivocal.

But how indeed was he to portray the ineffable? Flesh is and remains flesh. The expression of divine love may not perhaps differ from that of profane love, if one ignores the setting and general atmosphere. It is by the

exact placing of the angel, who will pierce her breast with his arrow and bring her both pain and solace, that Bernini evokes a spiritual atmosphere. Yet some critics refuse to recognize the true significance of the angel. In his smile, so full of compassion, they can only see the mischievous grin of a pander. When the artist tries to represent the ecstasy as the Saint herself described it, the critics dub it sensuality. This body of a woman, whose beauty and youth even her scapulary cannot obscure, itself becomes the scene of a miracle—the fleeting and agonizing fusion of living matter with Divine Spirit. The final end of carnal love, but also the almost deathlike ecstasy of spiritual union, here find their perfect artistic form.

Throughout the whole composition one has a feeling that a breeze is blowing, an element elusive, invisible, but nevertheless real. It has borne the angel from Heaven, it is the breeze that has blown the clouds up to obscure the sun, and it lifts and models the coarse homespun habit of the Saint, giving it the lightness of fine silk.

This work was done ten years before the cathedra in St Peter's, though even now there are premonitions of the later work. Certainly neither of them could have been either conceived or executed in any age not so permeated by the fervour and religious feeling of the century. If this is not the work of a mystic, at least it is that of an artist so deeply religious that he can successfully present the mystical with an authority that makes those who carp at it belittle themselves. It is superb. Later artists have made attempts to reproduce a scene of ecstasy. None have succeeded, and *The Ecstasy of St Teresa* remains unique in the history of Christian sculpture. Bernini himself never again attempted to depict an ecstasy. Such a state of grace is rarely achieved in the lifetime of a religious; such grace of inspiration is as rarely achieved by an artist.

Some have compared the St Teresa to the recumbent figure of the blessed Louisa Albertoni, which was carved in 1675. But there we feel no angel present, but death; no ecstasy, but the last gasp of a body when the soul departs. Nor do we find ecstasy in the statue of St Jerome in the cathedral at Siena. Here the Saint trembles in a transport of joy as he contemplates the Crucifixion and the Love of God.

Bernini loved these two figures of the woman and the angel in which his profound sensibility found beauty, mystery and compassion. He carved many angels but, if we leave aside the glory of St Peter's, no angel can surpass in beauty that of *The Ecstasy*. The angel who hovers round the prophet Habakkuk in the group Bernini carved for Santa Maria del Popolo in 1657 is only symbolic and plays no really effective role like the angel who appears to St Teresa; he remains a stock figure. Those angels which, at the request of Clement IX, he executed for the Ponte Sant' Angelo (two of them were placed in Sant' Andrea delle Fratte) were designed as parts of a series of ten bearing the instruments of the Passion. They have vigour and grace; yet there is something a bit pernickety and affected about them, as if the artist, after his great masterpieces, could not

62 again renew the theme, even though facility was Bernini's strength and, some might say, almost a besetting sin.

There is a certain feeling of relaxation when one turns to Borromini, whose output was not so overwhelming. He too could carve angels, but in quite a different style. He looked, if one dare say so, for something more celestial than Bernini understood, and preferred cherubim and seraphim who could be depicted traditionally without bodies: only a face with a child's head of hair, and spreading wings. The angels of Borromini leave no individual impression, nor do they play, like the angel who visits St Teresa, any dramatic role, but Borromini uses them to produce an effect of other-worldliness that has never been approached. It may be in St John Lateran or when he turns them into caryatids—aerial caryatids whose fluttering wings support the delicate campanile of Sant' Andrea delle Fratte [62].

One sees them again in the last work that Borromini undertook. Here, above the main doorway in that extraordinary façade he added to San Carlino in 1667, the figure of San Carlo Borromeo is sheltered by two angels at his side, whose wings entwine to form a pure and elegant arch [45]. It is impossible to say what inspired Borromini, whether his angelic figures were based on living models, conceived from the reading of pious works, or simply sprang from his imagination.

To solve this problem one would have to know how familiar Borromini was with the Byzantine icons which for so long influenced the Sieneese school, for the angels of Borromini have an emotional affinity with the angels we see on icons. One feels it in spite of all the difference in technique, and in spite of the Renaissance which had been undoubtedly the greatest influence in Borromini's life. Once I heard a critic declare that Western art was incapable of rendering angels because it made them all appear like Greek gods, while Eastern religious art, which was more abstract, had retained the secret of depicting the spiritual. This is, by and large, false, but there is a modicum of truth in it. The Platonic ideal of beauty had been resurrected by the Renaissance and to clothe angelic beauty in perfected human form was but natural: fairer than the sons of man, the angels still were essentially related to them. But both Byzantine and Russian art had broken away from the inspiration provided by natural objects, in however idealized a form, to interpret more closely their spiritual and emotional feelings. They created beings which may appear strange to Western eyes, but their very strangeness is full of mystery and charm, dream-like creations, instead of intellectual idealizations. They are more abstract and removed from the world as it is, but they approximate more closely to the inner and spiritual life. Somehow the introspective Borromini has given some of this mystery which we associate with the hieratic images of the Orient to his angels. He was working in a different tradition, but his fervour and abstract faith have a Byzantine quality.





32  
*The Burial of St Petronilla*, painted in 1621 by Guercino. 'A profoundly moving composition. There are two scenes, one tragic and gripping, the other celestial. Note the play of shade and light.' (A. Michel, *Histoire de l'art*, Vol. VI, p. 88)



The quality of Domenichino's *Last Communion of St Jerome* comes from the skilful counterpoise of the two groups, and the touching humility of the Father of the Church before the Host





Caravaggio's *Death of the Virgin* is a huge canvas painted for the church of Santa Maria della Scala in Trastevere and then removed. The painter's contemporaries reproached him for his lack of religious feeling





Caravaggio's *St Matthew* was intended for the church of San Luigi dei Francesi but its brutal strength offended the refined taste of the aristocracy of the day. However, others admire Caravaggio's religious painting for that very reason



Caravaggio's incomparable *Madonna of Loretto* is an important historical document on the life of the poor pilgrims who flocked to Rome for the jubilees



RIGHT. Bernini created a baldacchino for St Peter's, enlarging the canopy that was extended over the Holy Sacrament in processions to monumental dimensions. He made permanent in bronze what had previously been constructed only of wood and cloth

37

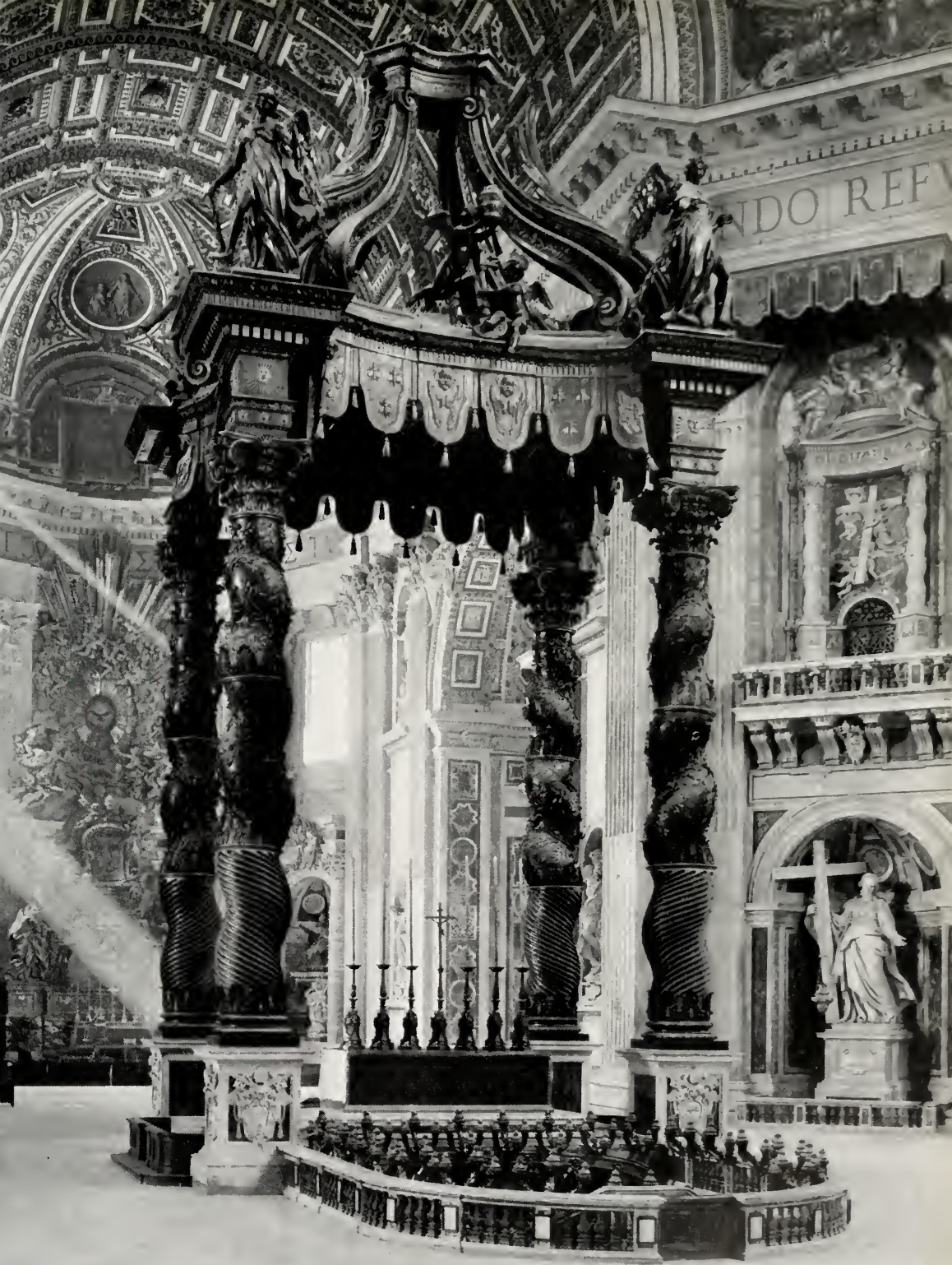
'This admirable bust of Cardinal Scipio Borghese brings back to life, with all his characteristic features, his attitude and his expression, the great lord who was the protector of the young Bernini.' (M. Reymond, *Le Bernini*, p. 69)



38

Bernini's Triton fountain in Rome: 'An example of the use of curved forms alone, without a straight line. It is one of the most interesting works in existence from the point of view of composition, taste in ornament and creative fantasy, and is undoubtedly one of the master's greatest.' (M. Reymond, *Le Bernini*, p. 42)









- 40 The statues in the transept of St Peter's were designed by four different sculptors. ABOVE LEFT: Bernini's statue of St Longinus, 1638, the Roman soldier who pierced the side of the Dead Christ. ABOVE RIGHT: St Veronica, by Mochi, 1639, running towards Christ on the Cross with her handkerchief. BELOW LEFT: The statue of St Andrew, 1659, by the Flemish sculptor Duquesnoy, which led to a rift with Bernini. BELOW RIGHT: St Helena, mother of Constantine, sculpted by  
42 Bernini's pupil, Bolgi, in 1649 43





The interior of the little convent church of San Carlo alle Quatre Fontane (San Carlino) was the first work to reveal Borromini's genius; he achieved marvellously graceful effects within a narrow space



On the extraordinary façade of San Carlino the figure of St Charles Borromeo is enshrined over the central door; the meeting of the wings of two angels forms a single pure and elegant arch







46

Borromini's Oratory of San Filippo Neri is a work of the Counter-Reformation. The façade curves inwards on both storeys, as does the trilobite pediment which crowns it



47

In Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza, the chapel of the University of Rome, Borromini has set soaring above a hexagon a round dome surmounted by a lantern which is continued in a spiral





ABOVE. In the interior of St John Lateran, Borromini's ornamentation fails to achieve all the harmony needed in a building of this kind. BELOW. One of Borromini's charming decorative features: cherubs in the side aisles of St John Lateran







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LEFT. Sant' Agnese, by Borromini. Innocent X, of the Pamphili family, had this church built in the Place Navone, near the patrician palace of which it became the chapel. ABOVE: The façade. The plan is a Greek cross, but the placing of the chapels between the arms of the cross makes the church appear round. The interior (BELOW) is corinthian with magnificent columns and fluted pilasters supporting the arcades and the pendentives on which the cupola rests



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RIGHT. Sant Andrea al Quirinale, by Bernini, has a façade (ABOVE) with a lofty portico, slender pilasters and a triangular pediment. Severe lines form a moulded arch, a little in front of it, and two columns placed diagonally under a decorated baldachino form a kind of peristyle. The interior (BELOW) has a setting of fluted pilasters, between which open the arcades of eight chapels in the thickness of the wall. Faces of angels, lively and delicate, stand out against the sombre background







LEFT. St Peter's chair, traditionally believed to have been used by him. Bernini set it in a great reliquary in the form of an armchair upheld by huge figures of the Fathers of the Church. ABOVE: detail

RIGHT. Bernini decided to circumscribe the open space of the basilica of St Peter's in a great elliptical frame consisting of a colonnade (ABOVE). The interior of the colonnade (BELOW)

54



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57





- 58 The arrangement of porticos in the side aisle of St Peter's leads the eye to the central pillars supporting the cupola. The portico columns are the finest cut from single blocks of stone since classical times

Two tombs in St Peter's, by Bernini. LEFT: The sepulchre of Pope Urban VIII, which breaks away from the Renaissance tradition and becomes the archetype of the Baroque tomb. RIGHT: The tomb of Pope Alexander VII, whose calm figure embodies the teachings of the ageing Bernini: that we must continue to

- 59 hope for peace though we may have to admit the reality of fear







- 61 The Ecstasy of St Teresa, by Bernini: 'I saw close to me, on my left, an angel in corporeal form. . . . He held a long barb of gold. . . . It seemed to me that from time to time he plunged it through my heart. . . . The exquisite joy caused by this incomparable pain is so excessive that the soul cannot want it to cease.' (*Life of St Teresa of Avila*)



62 Angels, caryatids light as breath, seem to support the strongly-contrasted but delicate architecture of the campanile of Sant'Andrea delle Fratte, by Borromini





63 The fountain in the Piazza Navona, for which Bernini chose a cosmic theme: the gift of water distributed by great rivers to the four corners of the earth



- 64 One of the features of Baroque art, the grotesque, is seen in this caricature which frames the windows and the doors of the Casa Zuccaro, in the Via Gregoriana, Rome, built at the end of the sixteenth century by Federico Zuccaro



There can be no question of considering the works of Bernini or Borromini one by one, but those which have been discussed are representative. Yet, if only to refute the opinion that eloquence, sometimes carried to excess, always characterizes Bernini's work, one should recall the austere simplicity of the church in Ariccia. It is a design carried out in white unrelieved by any gilt and is crowned by a low cupola.

A French traveller in the eighteenth century, a contemporary of President de Brosses, summed it up very fairly. 'Here is the best possible taste. The composition is learned, the eyes are soothed by looking at it, and the execution is admirable.' Marcel Reymond quotes this and adds, 'No one who holds the current view about Bernini could ever imagine this was one of his works.'<sup>21</sup> How sad to think that even forty years after Reymond published his studies these words remain equally true today. If only opinions about Bernini were not still founded on prejudice instead of knowledge of his works, this church would not surprise us. Bernini, master of triumphant Baroque as he was, remained, especially as an architect, a classicist and at Ariccia one can recognize his especial admiration for the Pantheon and how at home he felt with the antique.

The little portico of three arches under the triangular pediment is so simple that it gives almost an impression of economy, but it shows once more the care which Bernini took never to let the worshippers enter the centre of a church straight away, and shows too how inextricably mingled were the decorator and the architect in him. At some distance the church at Ariccia is surrounded by a low and regular gallery which isolates it and cuts it off from the buildings of the piazza and forms, as it were, a stone casket for it. It is a theatrical device, but one carried out with great discretion, with no searching after effect or attempt to surprise. Only calm and quietness reign here. The truth is that Bernini varied the stress on the decorative or architectural elements of a work according to the circumstances, unless he fused them into an indissoluble whole.

One has noticed this in Sant' Andrea al Quirinale and will come across it again in his designs for the Louvre. It is equally true of the fountains for which he was so famous. It needed an architect to build a fountain, though it might seem but a decorative element in a piazza or a piece of urban landscape gardening.

In Rome, to bring in water to the city had been a vital necessity, but by the time of Innocent X there was such a plethora of fountains that the mob began shouting 'No more fountains. Give us bread.' The most remarkable of all Bernini's fountains was the one which the Pope asked him to build in the Piazza Navona [63]. Here his twin talents scored a veritable triumph. The fountain was to serve as a base for an obelisk which had once adorned the Circus of Maxentius on the Apennine Way. Bernini planned his composition round no less grand a theme than the divine power of water, which through the great rivers brings fecundity to the vegetable and animal kingdoms in all four quarters of the globe. The Nile was to stand



64 for Africa; the Danube for Europe; the Ganges for Asia, and the Americas were symbolized by the Rio Plata. The water gushes forth from grottoes overshadowed by blocks of stone, which make up the artificial mountains crowned by the obelisk.

Here a lion, a crocodile and a horse have come down to drink, and in the fourth grotto the waters lap round the base of a palm tree. The statues of the rivers are placed at the cardinal points; they may be serene or turbulent or, like the figure of the Nile, mysterious, veiling her head to show that no one knows whence she came. Such symbolism would have been clear to any Roman of the seventeenth century, and he might well let his imagination dwell on the universal blessings of water merely by looking at this one Roman fountain.

The difference between Bernini and Borromini is profound, whether one considers their temperaments or their works, but both of them enriched Rome by creating new masterpieces which in their vigour and beauty recalled and developed the glorious inheritance of the Renaissance. They were outstanding in their generation, and what a generation it was! Bernini had a whole workshop of students to carry out his designs. There were the sculptors—Fancelli, Baratta, Cartari, Mazzuoli, Morelli, Giorretti and Roggi—who worked on the figures for the Piazza Navona, the tomb of Alexander VII and for those of the Ponte Sant Angelo.

One painter, Gaulli, otherwise known as Baciccio, might also be described as his disciple. He admitted that he owed nearly everything to Bernini, but that the most valuable thing he had learnt was the maxim that there must, if possible, be movement in any work of art. Baciccio painted the dazzling fresco of St Ignatius in glory which is, in its stucco frame, the main feature of the saint's chapel in the Gesù [III]. His use of colour in the churches of Vignola and Tristano initiated a new tradition of richness and brilliance that was carried on by the works of Fra Pozzo until the end of the century.

Many other independent artists were also busy at the same time: building churches and palaces, decorating altar pieces, painting pictures or designing those innumerable frescoes which decorate so many aisles and ceilings and cupolas. The richness of their colouring and stucco work, and their exuberance and brilliance gave a special character to the Roman churches. Some artists were both architect and painter. For instance to Pietro da Cortona (who died in 1669) we owe the frescoes in the Barberini palace and those in the apse of the Chiesa Nuova, the beautiful curved façade of SS Luca e Martina at the Forum, the noble setting of Santa Maria della Pace with its small colonnaded portico in front of the convex façade, and the two colonnades which form the atrium to Santa Maria in Via Lata on the Corso (1658).

The most restrained artist and the one who approached most nearly to a classical serenity of style was Algardi (1592-1654) who was both an archi-

tect and a sculptor who became renowned for his admirable marble reliefs for altar pieces.

Carlo Rainaldi, whom Louis XIV asked to draw up plans for the Louvre, made an astonishing work of the church of Santa Maria in Campitelli. Here he found a perfect solution to very difficult spatial problems by using the interplay of the columns as the main decorative feature.

Generation after generation of new painters arose. Domenichino, who had shown such genius in decorating Sant' Andrea della Valle, died in 1641, and Guido died the next year. But Guercino, the last of the Bolognese, survived them for more than twenty years, and when he died in 1666 both Carlo Maratta, who had been born in 1625, and Baciccio, born in 1639, were reaching their full maturity. In considering Roman painting of this period we should also include Poussin and Claude Lorraine, not only because of their long residence in the city but also because the studios they founded there played an essential part in the artistic life of the city. Velasquez too came to Rome, as Rubens had done before him. He struck up friendships with artists working there, and before he returned to paint the Spanish princesses, he captured for posterity the surprising and imperious figure of Innocent X whose piercing gaze seems to look beyond the spectator and fathom the secrets of the soul and the mystery of the world.

A new style had been formed. It was one that had grown out of the Renaissance and paid more respect to it than is often realized, but a century had elapsed since then and it had both to express new values and to serve a new society.

The names we have mentioned form an incomplete and restricted list and to a certain extent may give an unbalanced impression, nor, in the present state of our knowledge, do we know how many works are wrongly attributed, and there are many other artists of whom we know nothing.

Rome had become an astonishing city, with no industry or commerce to speak of, and with a hinterland that was steadily growing more impoverished. The reasons for its increase of population, its progress and its growing prestige were two: it was the religious capital of Catholicism and its fame had spread throughout the world as an artistic centre. One must imagine the constant stream of foreigners, coming to the city for every variety of reasons. The visits of Queen Christina of Sweden (who came to Rome in 1655, left after a few months, and then returned to settle there until her death) may be taken roughly as typical of the pomp and formality that marked the arrival of a prince or ambassador with their great retinues. They found in Rome a world and way of life of a richness not even dreamt of anywhere else in Europe. But apart from the illustrious, what a mass of obscure, but not unimportant visitors there were. Foreign artists, not all of them destined to become great masters, came here for their apprenticeships, and attached themselves either to the Academy of San Luca

- 66 or to some Roman studio. Priests, usually belonging to one of the orders, came to Rome to learn from their Masters the text of new offices and to absorb the religious spirit, which they were in their turn to spread throughout Europe and as far as America. The ramifications of their missionary work, which carried the values of Baroque Rome across the world, are known only in part, but to understand one of the most important aspects of the history of civilization we must study how they were welcomed, where they could expand their influence and where they met with obstacles that proved insurmountable.





## BOOK II





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## CHAPTER IV

# *The Reception of Baroque*

WHILE Rome, the papal city, was intoning its beautiful liturgies as though each were a song of triumph, one might well ask what was happening in Europe.

In the middle of the century the wars seemed to have at last died down throughout the continent. They had been long and bitter, and for thirty years from 1618 to 1648 Germany had seen nothing but the march and countermarch of armies. German historians have estimated that in certain parts the loss in human life and material damage amounted to no less than 60 per cent. The devastation was greatest in Pomerania, in Mecklenburg, along a line drawn from Magdeburg to Coburg, along the Main and, south of this river, as far as Lorraine to the west and Augsburg to the east. The devastation was equally severe in the Palatinate, on both banks of the Rhine, and along the upper reaches of the Danube Valley. To the east, the valley of the Oder and several districts in Silesia suffered the same fate. Here, though the percentage of devastation was not so high, and varied between 33 per cent and 66 per cent, it was very considerable, and the stricken areas comprised the greater part of the Empire—Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, Hesse, a large part of Saxony, Silesia, Bohemia, the rich plains of northern Moravia, the whole of Bavaria, the middle valley of the Danube, the plains of Baden and Alsace, the archbishoprics of Trier, Mainz and Cologne, the Duchy of Nassau, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the small principalities south of Brunswick. The losses were not quite so heavy in the territories bordering this area (15 per cent to 33 per cent) but the only regions that escaped comparatively lightly—which means nevertheless, an average destruction of 15 per cent—were the rather barren lands of Westphalia or the alpine regions of the Hapsburg domains. The great forest lands suffered less, and became an asylum for refugees.<sup>1</sup> Farther east we find the long drawn-out military campaigns had created equal havoc in Poland, and Russia was recovering very slowly from the disasters that had overwhelmed her at the beginning of the century, in the tragic and troubled times from 1601 to 1613.

The appalling losses that the European population had suffered are staggering. Nearly every country had been decimated, and the survivors were busy rebuilding ruins. One might almost speak of a Central Europe, bled



white and practically empty, faced in the south and the west by another Europe, teeming with life and about to harvest its riches. But this would be an exaggeration. First England, and then France, during the first years of Louis XIV, had suffered the shock of civil war. In France, the north-eastern provinces and the territories which were claimed by France and Spain had both suffered horrors that equalled any in Central Europe. Nor was war the only source of these calamities. Failure of harvests and consequent famines, epidemics, a rising death rate and a fall in the number of marriages and births accounted for much of the misery. But these natural visitations always come in the wake of war and, because of it, with added violence. Consequently any countries or regions that were spared the abysmal ruin caused by an invading army found themselves in a privileged position.

Their governments could collect taxes and call upon the military resources of their lands, and make investments both at home and abroad. Their power steadily increased. Even the people, who might wish to fight a losing battle for their pennies and their privileges against an ever encroaching State, enjoyed one inestimable boon—day-to-day security—though even by present-day standards that security was precarious enough.<sup>2</sup>

To ascribe everything to demographic causes is doubtless wrong, but one must remember that at this date, when Germany and the Danubian lands had been decimated, France had a population of fifteen million. What effect could political science, the wisdom of princes or the wishes of those in power have upon a country that was barely inhabited? And what mutations of social conditions, professional aptitudes, commercial undertakings and varied intellectual intercourse were barred in a society teeming with life and ready to inherit the fruits of a ripe intellectual and technical civilization? The strength of the State did not, most decidedly, rely merely upon the number of its citizens. England, the Netherlands and Spain, all of whom were more sparsely inhabited than France, were yet predominant not only in Europe, but throughout the world. In all three cases their ascendancy was based on naval power, which enabled them to dominate the normal maritime trade routes, and, what was growing ever more important, the Atlantic. The port of Lisbon, and even more so, the port of Cadiz were the main centres of wealth. The Casa de Contractación in Seville wielded the greatest economic power at that time; it was the clearing-house for all the ingots of precious metal that came from America, and controlled the distribution of them through the channels of European commerce—commercial life itself was centred on London and Amsterdam. The English and Dutch fleets carried the goods from one country to another, and it was their shipping companies which were able, by pooling resources, to risk more to explore new profitable trade openings than would have been possible for any private shipowner. The Bank of Amsterdam became the centre of international finance, and played a part in this expansion of trade. The power of commercial capitalism which had



- III Baciccio created this dazzling fresco of the apotheosis of St Ignatius. Surrounded by stucco ornamentations, it dominates the altar of the Jesuit saint in the Gesù in Rome, and its brilliant colour enriches the church of Vignola and Tristano





been born in the past century now rose to new heights; and geographically, north-western Europe increased in importance. It was not unconnected with the Protestant and predominantly Calvinist teaching, that had instilled a feeling of self-confidence in man's achievement and saw in prosperity gained by labour a blessing bestowed by the Almighty. These commercial northern countries experienced a new urban development at a time when the Italian cities had passed their zenith and, although still wealthy, were beginning to live on their capital instead of their earnings. In the Netherlands, perhaps nearly a half of the population became urbanized.

These densely populated and flourishing towns, inhabited by the middle classes, were also in a sense strong Protestant fortresses where the propaganda of the Counter-Reformation or the sumptuousness of Italian art found little response. If, as historians of German culture are apt to do, one describes everything seventeenth century as Baroque, it can only be looked on as a chronological idiom, for there is nothing here that even reminds one of contemporary Roman art.

It is not that Dutch art of the seventeenth century is always austere, or lacking in exuberance and richness, but it retains a realism and a preference for solidity that is antipathetic to the exuberant Latin taste for the fantastic. One feels it is more akin to the German Renaissance, with its massive architecture and gross and heavy ornamentation.

In the Belgian Provinces, which were Catholic and Spanish, we find the opposite—not only influences from the Iberian Peninsula but also from Italy found a welcome there and managed to mingle with the local traditions of the Renaissance (and in a minor degree with the more ancient Gothic) to produce a new artistic resurgence. In England, the king, the court and the aristocracy were all influenced by the Roman Baroque school. We have already seen that Charles I and Henrietta Maria had commissioned busts from Bernini. The British ambassador in Venice was Fielding (the second Earl of Denbigh). He was so fervent an admirer of Italian music that Manelli and Ferrari, who invented the cantata, both dedicated collections of songs to him. Indeed, was it not in Rome itself that Milton in 1639 conceived the idea of writing *Paradise Lost*?

The success of the Baroque was of course predominantly bound up with the Counter-Reformation, but economic factors played scarcely less a role.

In the economic and technical progress of the seventeenth century, scientific thought played a considerable part, but the industrial revolution which it ultimately led to, and which was eventually completely to change Europe and the world, still lay far ahead. Until machinery had developed, and demanded large concentrations of workmen near the factories, industrial production was still closely interwoven with rural life. Commercial capitalism was interested in trading goods that were directly or indirectly agricultural: cereals and all manner of foodstuffs, or textiles which were

processed from flax, hemp and wool. The economic structure of Europe had deep roots in the countryside and rural life. And two great forces contributed to conserve this pattern. The devastation which we have mentioned, had to be made good, and land that had been abandoned had to be brought back under the plough. The rise of the great landowner which had been evident in most countries at the end of the sixteenth century still continued. In addition, during the first third of the seventeenth century there was a slump in the production of the American mines, and this had had economic repercussions throughout the world.<sup>3</sup> Were the lodes of ore worked out? Would the ever-increasing costs of the Spanish possessions in America swallow up the wealth that was produced and leave no ingots or money over for the mother country? This scarcity of silver was the cause of the financial difficulties which faced the Spanish government in its war against France. It may indeed have been the cause of its final defeat. It certainly modified the whole of European economy.

The great powers tried out various palliatives, but a general stagnation persisted and this in its turn had the effect of keeping more people working on the land. At the same time, now that immediate peril seemed to be a thing of the past, the birth-rate took an upward, if irregular, trend: the peasant masses increased, only to find themselves in the grip of an inadequate and inelastic economy. What, one may ask, has this growing strength of the peasantry or the monetary crisis to do with Baroque? The effects of both were, in fact, very great.

Sometimes one is led to believe that the display of riches so favoured by sixteenth-century religious art might have appeared a scandalous thing in the eyes of the lower classes, who still lived in misery. To the Roman plebs it meant nothing, in spite of riots that were occasionally caused by exceptionally severe conditions. The people of Rome were used to living a life of poverty surrounded by churches and palaces which were resplendent with gold and marble, but this richness was not offensive. To them it seemed that, in some measure, they shared the grandeur. Marcel Reymond with his lively understanding of the spirit of Baroque, wrote 'Never in this world has the democratic ideal been affirmed in so sovereign a manner. Never have men been told more clearly "You are all brothers, and even if equality is not present every hour of your life, you will find her at least from the moment you open the doors of this church and enter the sanctuary where all these riches are offered to you, the poorest of men, and you may find treasures and pageants of art which before were reserved for the Princes of the earth".'<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the fraternal intentions of the artists concerned have been slightly exaggerated, but the Roman people certainly responded as though they had received such an invitation. Nor did this happen only in Rome. In Naples and in Venice it was the same. One almost wonders if the beauty of the climate did not play its part in this. Though it may have increased the laziness of the poorer classes or at least have stifled any initiative to conquer

their poverty, it made life out of doors pleasant; they enjoyed the constantly changing beauty of the skies and the varied lights reflected by the sea or canals, and they may have come to love the magnificent display of the arts, whether profane or religious, as yet another rich and pleasing aspect of nature. Yet, if we turn to countries where the climate could hardly be considered a help in forming such an appreciation of splendour, we find that the peasants reacted in much the same way to the ostentation of Baroque. And one knows very little of the peasantry of the seventeenth century when it comes to drawing a picture of Europe as a whole. Every country and even every province has its own characteristics. The feeling and the customs of each depend on local working methods, their relationship with the neighbouring countryside, the degree of liberty or enslavement under which they labour—though all have one thing in common, for tradition weighs more heavily on them than on town-dwellers. A peasant's livelihood was above all precarious: bad weather or an epidemic, against which there was no protection, might at any moment inexorably overwhelm him and plunge him in even greater misery. Mostly he relied on saws and maxims to tell him what to do: nearly everywhere a peasant would be apt to dig in his heels against rational argument, but be credulous when anything touched on local lore. He was religious, but he usually preferred his religion to be vague and superstitious, without morals and devoid of doctrine. He was a baptized Christian, but still a pagan at heart.<sup>5</sup> It is worth remembering that Italy, the very country that Rome seemed so splendidly to dominate, was, in the seventeenth century, an Italy where the countryside was still a mission field as much in need of the preaching orders as any Protestant country, though their deviations from the faith were quite different.<sup>6</sup> They were ready for any marvel; they wanted something to brighten their hard and wearisome lives, some sign of hope or joy to mark the seasons of the year which would take them out of the everyday round and lend them some enchantment or reassurance. Often enough this happiness and sense of wonder could only come from their participation in church festivals or from the reflected glory of a fête held in one of the great houses. To endure a hard day-to-day life which primitive techniques and an almost total dependence on the weather rendered only too often discouraging, with nothing to read, with no amusements except those the village itself could provide, was the lot of a labourer in the country. Had it not been for the parish church, or an abbey in the neighbourhood, they might never have known there were such things as silver and gold, nor seen polished marbles or the rich colours of pictures. Anyone living in the eastern provinces or in the plains of Russia owed whatever glimpses they had of beauty or grandeur to the liturgy or to the architecture of the church.

In Central and Eastern Europe, and in the south of Germany, the peasant population, incredibly poor and inured to misery as they were, never thought of resenting Baroque for its ostentation or flamboyance. They



74 welcomed it sometimes with enthusiasm for those very qualities, for they brought some ray of light into the drabness. The works of art in their local church were a source of pride whether they were of such quality that might appeal to the most exacting connoisseur, or merely the naive illuminations in a missal.

To have thought that the lavish expenditure of the church or the gentry on such things could have any relation to their own unremitting poverty was beyond most of these simple people. Nothing could be further from the truth than to imagine or describe the people as satisfied with their lot, jogging along happily, posies in hand, in interminable rural processions. They were the same men who rose in revolt against the taxes imposed by the king or local barons and sometimes, as in 1670, 1675 and 1680, one could speak of a peasant revolution that shook all Europe. It raged from the Volga, where the serfs rose under Stepan Razine, through Bohemia, where castles were burnt down, on to Brittany, where breakings on the wheel and hangings were ordered by de Chaulnes. There was nothing idyllic about this, but all the same too much stress should not be placed upon the uprisings. There was something in the peasant soul that was particularly susceptible to a ritualistic religion and imaginative art.

The missionaries of the Counter-Reformation, who were often themselves of peasant origin, understood this perfectly. It is true that part of their effort was concentrated on proselytizing the upper classes, on the principle that if you were sure of conquering the officers you would also get the men. But it is a grave mistake to ignore the care taken to make direct contact with the rural masses, and evangelize them. The methods employed were simple and few, though considerable subtlety could be used in putting them into practice: church services were made attractive by fine singing, and the churches themselves, with their almost theatrical flair for lighting, had an appeal. The devotion felt for a Calvary or a local statue was encouraged by pilgrimages, and parochial life became more closely bound up with one particular saint. Catholic propaganda in the seventeenth century scored its greatest successes in southern Germany, Bohemia, and Poland, in regions that had recently been devastated—areas where the people were gradually filtering back and, on the whole, settling down as peasants. Like them religion had practically to start again from scratch, and it borrowed Roman Baroque forms. Under the circumstances it is difficult indeed to discover qualities which some find to be racial and indigenous. Even Russia, still faithful to the Greek Church and cherishing a hatred of the Latin heresy—a hatred that was intensified because of its associations with its dreaded neighbour, Poland—still turned to Baroque for church decoration throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was because Russia was poor and a peasant country, and moreover, being Orthodox, favoured the liturgy and the cult of saints.

At the other extreme of Europe the Spanish people showed an equal love of the spectacular, and religious faith, to which there was added here

a touch of savagery, delighted in frequent large and fanatical processions. Classical taste was confined to court circles or the cultured few, but the mass of the people showed a passion for almost nightmarish imagery. During Holy Week they loved to see the huge painted figures of Christ, dripping with blood, and of the Virgin, pale and weeping, borne in procession, and clothed with embroideries worked by the devout. No doubt it was a renewal of a medieval trend, but it was animated by a new fervency that led to a new piety, and the younger generation were so much drawn to a cloistered life that it is beyond question that religious celibacy played its part in the depopulation of Spain in the seventeenth century.

This movement would never have grown to such proportions had it not been for the misery of life on the land. Here poverty, in sharp contrast to the rich cities, was unrelenting and the inhabitants thought that they could find in religion a comfort that was denied them on every other side.<sup>7</sup>

One must not look to the agricultural masses for the origin of the Baroque but, when once it had been introduced to them, its particular form of sensibility aroused a strong and enduring response [68]. In the Catholic or Orthodox countries, where the pattern of rural life persisted for several generations, we find that the Baroque maintained its power and appeal. We find it losing its hold when new economic forces break down the traditional way of life and gradually introduce urban values to the countryside. The dates when this happened differ from country to country.

While the Baroque was spreading throughout Italy, absolute monarchy was strengthening its hold in several European states, and the central authority of the king was steadily encroaching upon the powers in the provinces or at court which had retained till then a degree of autonomy. Local liberties and the privileges of rank were both curtailed, and the tendency was to standardize the law.

This change was brought about in many different ways. An absolute monarch might impose his will and command obedience by crushing rebellion by armed force, by sending his own agents to suspend traditional administrative functions, by levying taxes, or by limiting the judicial and fiscal privileges of the clergy. At the same time the king was apt to intervene in economic affairs, to direct production, control competition, and subordinate individual initiative to the interests of the State. This was a monarchy at the same time military and political, and administrative. The monarchy can be looked at from many angles, and historians differ widely in their appreciation of this centralized authority; it depends largely on what they mean by the progress of the country or the life of its citizens. Some see in it the birth of despotism; others, coherence and reason working together to organize the State on the best possible lines. Others, according to how they interpret the spirit of Baroque, with its many-sided imagination, hold that an atmosphere inimical to order and unity was being fostered.<sup>8</sup>

There are no lack of arguments to back up this point of view. The age of Henri II in France and of Philip II in Spain, and to a certain degree the intervention of Richelieu in literary and artistic life, all favoured a classical ideal based on the rules of reason or the imitation of the best models. But, though this is true, absolute monarchy was in no way the offspring of jurists or doctrinaires. A philosophy of royal power was in line with the Renaissance; it was backed up by arguments based on classical history and, largely through the achievements of Machiavelli, by a science of government which upheld and strengthened it. But absolute monarchy is essentially religious.

As a matter of course, in the tradition of the Middle Ages, it brought the priest's consecration, and by 'the divinity that doth hedge a king', raised him above the laity as though he were himself half-priest. Reiterating but reformulating this thought, the prince's authority needed no intermediary. The power of the king became Divine Right, nor was it possible for any secular or ecclesiastical power to absolve subjects from their obedience.

In France Gallicanism trembled lest the Pope claimed a right to depose kings.<sup>9</sup> In the Protestant countries, the sovereign became head of the church. In Russia the middle of the century saw a renewal of the quarrel between the church and the Empire, which ended in the submission of the patriarch. But, outweighing all that, monarchy was and remained religious because it wished to create round the dignity and person of the sovereign a feeling of trust and fervent admiration that was essentially a religious emotion. In that we can perhaps see the essence of monarchy in the seventeenth century. The fulsome and subservient phrases which fill the political tracts or books of the period are witness only to the conventional hyperbole of the time and carry little weight compared with the bearing and actions of people. At the height of the rebellion in Bohemia, when the king's deputies were defenestrated, the churches tolled their bells to mourn the death of Mathias, who was, whether one obeyed him or not, the legitimate sovereign. During the Civil Wars in England the Parliamentary soldiers always admitted that Charles I was the true king, and even when he was beheaded in Whitehall women rushed forward to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood. The fame of the French kings for touching for the King's Evil was so widespread that the roads throughout Flanders and Lorraine were crammed with invalids making their way to Paris, where they blocked the courtyard of the Louvre so that the Most Christian Sovereign—even if only a horror-stricken child like Louis XIII—might touch them and say 'May God cure you. The King has touched you.'<sup>10</sup>

The re-establishment of the monarchy after the wars was not entirely due to clever political manoeuvres. It was due to the enthusiasm of the people, who felt that a nation without a legitimate king was widowed, and while the throne was empty or disputed, would remain bereft; it was that feeling that was responsible for the recall of Henri IV to Paris and, after the Fronde, for the welcome given to the young Louis XIV. In Russia it was



an outcry for a 'legitimate' king that brought Michael Romanov to the throne.<sup>11</sup> When one considers this, it is very difficult to link up the idea of monarchy with a purely national ideal or to ignore the fact that an absolute monarchy appealed more and more strongly to sentiment and emotion the more it elevated the person of the king. Thus, it appeared right that royalty should be surrounded by pomp and circumstance that would inspire respect in all who approached it. The fact that a king like Francis I, who was an enlightened connoisseur, enjoyed assembling the best artists of his day and surrounding himself with artistic treasures, has little to do with it. It was a much more serious matter than a question of the good taste of one cultured individual. Richelieu stressed the importance of royal palaces in impressing strangers with the grandeur of the king.<sup>12</sup> Bossuet, in the next generation, takes up the same theme with prophetic fervour:

'Expenditure on the magnificence and dignity of the king is no less necessary . . . to maintain his majesty in the eyes of strangers . . .

'King Solomon was served with vessels of gold. All the vases in the house of Lebanon were of pure gold . . .

'God forbid ostentation that springs from vanity and the puffed-up folly of a court intoxicated by riches but He was well pleased that the Court of the King was brilliant and magnificent, to inspire respect amongst the peoples.

'And in our day when a monarch is consecrated . . . the church offers up this prayer: "May the glorious dignity and the majesty of the palace blaze out, for all to see, the splendid grandeur of the royal power so that, as a stroke of lightning, it sheds light in every direction".

'All these words are chosen to describe the magnificence of a royal court which is asked of God as a necessary support to royalty' [70].<sup>13</sup>

Such a doctrine does not, of course, imply the choice of any particular form of art, since effects of grandeur and luxury can be combined with a strict adherence to classical and rational canons or can, on the other hand, find expression in the fantasy of the Baroque. Certainly such an outspoken desire for the magnificent and astonishing must have encouraged the latter solution. Bossuet and the Coronation Service call not upon any Greek ideal but rather upon oriental splendour, reminiscent of Solomon in all his glory, to support the monarchy.

The spirit of the Baroque has many and striking affinities with the outlook of the peasantry, the monarchy, and with the greater part of the European population. There remained, however, the powerful and varied world of the nobility,<sup>14</sup> whose relations with peasant and sovereign alike were always shifting and sometimes contradictory. We have already seen how during the sixteenth century the relationship of the nobles and newly ennobled bourgeoisie with rural life had undergone a change. It is certain that where a noble lived on his estates, the land was not considered merely as a source of revenue, which might yield a higher income if wisely run, but also as a symbol of the continuity of the family: the word 'fortune' in

such circumstances expressed the idea of calling as well as wealth. Bounded as he might be by smaller horizons, the nobleman's attitude was not unlike that of a king to his country. A bond was formed between the landlord and his demesne which became as much a moral obligation as an economic factor. The seigneur exercised his rights in the manner of a king or of a father. He governed, judged and administered; sometimes he found himself called on to lead an army. There were petty princelings who levied dues over territories as extensive as a French province. The vassalage which bound other lords to him, and the men who were subordinate to him by paying quit-rent and other sorts of rent in varying degrees, or by rendering feudal service in kind or in money, reproduced on a small scale the hierarchy of the material world as well as the obedience which the humblest subject rendered to the king.

When the Duc de la Rochefoucauld led a troop of fifteen hundred gentlemen-at-arms to help Louis XIII in the siege of La Rochelle, he presented them to the king in these words: 'Sire, there is none here but is my kin.' It was a gesture and a speech that clearly shows how closely the authority wielded by the lord resembled that of royalty itself. When Montmorency raised the whole of Languedoc against the king, it was due to his authority as a prince (though no doubt feudalism still played a part) which, as far as it extended, was the same as the power exercised by the king in the whole kingdom. Those who followed the rebel did not look so far afield as to consider the rights of the State or the principles at stake: they were obeying their local king. When the Cardinal de Retz escaped from prison at Nantes and found that he could not reach Paris because of his broken shoulder, he raised an escort of three hundred men from his paternal territory. With them he took the road from Retz—the county from which he derived his name—and passed by the sentries guarding the bridge of Pirmil without fear, like a local king who, in his own land and surrounded by his own people, has no reason to dread the power of any other far-distant king.

One could quote many examples. In these particular cases and in the political field as a whole, there is no question that the king and the aristocracy were on opposite sides. It was an open conflict where one could only gain by inflicting defeat on the other. In short, there were two kings: one little, the other great, one feeble, the other strong—and they had to fight each other. It is true that the great king in many respects—both juristic and political—was able to call upon resources so rich that the provincial potentate had no idea of their existence. There is another factor we must take into account. This seemingly royal power enjoyed by the great nobles was only conceivable in their hereditary lands or where they had firmly established their hold. Once that noble was transported to court or into the army, or if he were sent to head an embassy abroad, the only greatness left him was *ex officio* and but a reflection of that of his master, the king. As a courtier or as a soldier he moved in an atmosphere

of pomp and fine romanticism and it was only possible that now and again he might distinguish himself by some individual bravery or show.<sup>15</sup> But at home, in his own territory, the power of a great nobleman cannot be computed solely by the honours that were rendered him willingly or perforce at his castle or in the local church, or by acknowledging the venerable authority which surrounded him as representative of his community—all these find expression in many aspects of Baroque civilization, both in France and other countries. But that is to overlook the role he played as local king, which was one that influenced every contact between noble and peasant.

There are arguments galore to present this as an example of class warfare, and to point out how the dues demanded by the noble stripped the peasant bare, while the restrictions of free movement and action suffered by a serf hindered any economic progress and was the greatest curse throughout most of Europe. The various rebellions seem, undeniably, to support this theory. There is, however, another side to the question. Those nobles who took their social position seriously were, though certainly not peasants or rural folk, nevertheless landholders, and this was a fact of great significance. The land which was theirs should redound to their glory. On it they built mansions where, depending upon circumstances, education or taste, they might indulge in the refined enjoyment of art or in ruder pleasures; but above all, there was sure to be a liberal table, a well-stocked cellar, and a fire on the hearth to welcome the huntsmen after the chase. The village church was at the same time the family chapel and it seemed that, quite apart from any metaphysical principles or theological dogmas, the god who dwelt there might well be some distant relation who kept a kindly eye on them.

The ideas which a noble entertained about life certainly led to an emotional rather than a rational outlook, and one which was tinged with Baroque feelings. There were many occasions when the aristocracy found themselves at one with the peasants—a people whom they found alien, servile, but at the same time of a kindred spirit, for their way of thinking and feeling was not unlike their own. Changing circumstances and the growing tension of conflicting interests stretched this pattern of a land-owning society to breaking point. In spite of this the simple exchange of services—protection repaid by trust and loyalty—kept the system alive. As in everything, one can find a formula to justify or excuse, or one to condemn, or one might sum it up that on one side there was harsh power and arrogance, while the other was resigned to rendering their services. Perhaps it was so, but whether one praises or blames the system, it had a distinctly Baroque flavour.

Even before the seventeenth century the difference between the outlook and way of life of countrymen and townsfolk had become so great that it seemed inevitable that what one favoured was precisely what the other



80 detested. If the peasants and nobles felt the attraction of the Baroque, one might expect the bourgeoisie to have quite different ideas. Yet there are many cities in Europe that are, above all, Baroque. Prague, for instance, which we shall consider later, Vienna, or, in the south of Italy, Lecce. Then, amongst others, Genoa and Verona are for the most part Baroque towns and if Venice, which shows such a multiplicity of masterpieces in every style, cannot be included, one cannot forget that it is the Salute—a Baroque church of great originality built in the second half of the seventeenth century—that dominates the entrance to the Grand Canal.

The character of a town is built up from so many different elements that it is unwise to attempt any generalization. What significance, for instance, should be attached to the building of a Baroque palace by a family which only used it when the Diet or Parliament was sitting and otherwise spent its life on its country estates? It bore no relation to the erection of a whole lot of buildings, which served some useful purpose demanded by the majority of the citizens. It goes without saying that, because of their religious feelings, Catholic countries welcomed the Baroque style, since it was reminiscent of Rome and the Counter-Reformation, just as the Protestant countries (such as England and above all the Netherlands) tended to discard any Roman influence; they were also the very countries where a rich middle class, led by magnates in shipping, banking or commerce, dominated the scene. With the exception of the Flemish provinces, which remained under Spanish and Catholic influence, Europe was splitting in two: in the north the growth and importance of the towns take on a significance which was unknown in Central Europe, where a rural pattern with its great landowners remained still predominant. One should nevertheless examine once more the part that the bourgeoisie, even the Catholic middle classes, played when it came to the question of accepting or rejecting the Baroque.

One would expect that such a class, intent on making its way, hard-working and ambitious, trained in the hard school of practical affairs or the study of the law, would have retained a realistic outlook; perhaps it was too much given over to logic, rationalism and practicalities to take any pleasure in the fantasies produced by this exuberant and imaginative style. But middle class society was too varied and changing to have its taste and tendencies pinned down with a single definition.<sup>16</sup> It was precisely in this class that one finds the most rare and mystical souls, the most altruistic spirits, and people who were prepared to sacrifice all in their fight for spiritual values. It might be thought that all this tended towards austerity, and therefore even farther away from any appreciation of the Baroque.

There were other emotional trends, however, which led the bourgeoisie to like it. They showed, especially in France, a certain truculence; slapstick comedy made them laugh, and the heartier the joke the better they were amused. In the middle of the century, burlesque may have been added to badinage in French literature without offence to good taste, but when it

was taken up 'by the coarse hands of the Pont-Neuf hacks'<sup>17</sup>—and had an enormous success—one realizes that it pandered to a very strong public taste. The public also liked something spectacular.<sup>18</sup> This was not confined to any one nation, and had little to do with national habits: shows were as popular in the frozen North as they were in the South. It was a taste fostered by the conditions of the age, when there was scarcely any travel and where people usually led an uncomfortable life at home, cramped both for light and space. It was only a very tiny majority that dared undertake those great voyages which were to exert an increasing influence on the contemporary economic structure of Europe and ended by destroying it. As Lucien Febvre says, 'These men were few but what they lacked in numbers they made up in mobility.'<sup>19</sup> But the great majority were stay-at-homes, and even in a town had to search hard for any amusement. That explains why, in spite of the dust (or mud), so much time was spent in the streets, where there was always a chance of something happening, something to look at. The Flemish were delighted by the grotesque carnival processions of gigantic figures, the Parisians loved the mountebanks, jugglers and sellers of quack medicine of the Pont-Neuf, and the Romans enjoyed horse races (which incidentally, gave the Corso its name) or mock naval battles in the Piazza Navona, which would be specially flooded for the occasion. Even nowadays literary critics blame this love of the spectacular and all the emotions it aroused for the tardy recognition given to the more austere forms of drama which attempted some verisimilitude and tried to keep to the unities laid down by Aristotle.

The residence of the king in the capital, of course, gave rise to innumerable spectacles which the citizens could enjoy, from the festivities surrounding his birth to the obsequies when he died: there were the state entries, royal marriages, the birth and baptisms of the royal children, the state receptions given to distinguished foreigners, and public thanksgivings. The large sums disbursed officially on public occasions often contrasted sharply with the stringent economy which individuals were forced to practise, but it would be unwise to try to trace any very close connection between the cost of living or the fluctuation of prices and the amounts of money spent on festivities.

Certainly periods of great poverty put a stop to extravagant spending; yet labour itself was cheap enough and the fees paid to the artists and technicians were so very moderate that a good show could be put on at no very great cost. The demand for something spectacular was so widespread and the pleasure everyone got out of the day's festivities was so wholehearted, that the question of bills which would have to be paid today or tomorrow did not worry anybody unduly. So, when some occasion arose that called for a public celebration and the expense might be quite considerable, there were few people really worried about what exactly it was going to cost. The Salute was built immediately after an epidemic that had ruined Venice economically. A study of votive churches would well illus-

82 trate this point. Intrinsically they had to be magnificent and sumptuous, for no expense must be spared when it was a question of giving praise to the Virgin—or some saint—who had interceded for them in their misfortune. It would prove that, at least in most cases, the desire to make some grandiose gesture of homage overruled any other consideration, even if it had been more sensible to use the funds available for more material and often urgent needs. Such disinterested gestures, in any society permeated with religion, played an essential part.

There was, then, no insuperable barrier between the bourgeois way of life and the ostentation which was a characteristic of Baroque art. But it is equally true that it was never welcomed by them nor particularly encouraged, even when the middle classes spread out into rural districts.

Many reasons could be found to explain this general tendency. Urban economy and, still more, individual financial transactions were very complex. What, for example, could you do if you had earned some money? How would you invest it? There was no organized system of credit, and loans were made to relations or neighbours, offices perhaps had to be bought, or money paid out for becoming a master of one's craft, family interests must be forwarded, or perhaps an artisan's workshop subsidized, or a pension secured. Savings might be dispensed in dribblets but only a very great occasion could call for a spending spree.

One of the reasons which led the middle classes, at least in France, to prefer a style more restrained than the Baroque was the education which they were given. Side by side with the businessman and the small tradesman, whom one might call the majority of the middle classes, there grew up an intellectual élite which became increasingly aloof and increasingly austere in its way of thinking. In the middle of the seventeenth century two trends should be noticed: a new clarity of expression in writing, and a more widespread knowledge of mathematics.

The liking of the Jesuits for the Baroque style had by now become established. Above all the colleges of the Jesuits, as they gained ground amongst the bourgeoisie, played an important part in the change of taste. They were indeed pioneers, though not the only ones. Richelieu, in the plan he formed as early as 1625 and which is summarized in his *Testament politique* records his mistrust of any body which wished to monopolize teaching. He thought it better 'that the Universities and the Jesuits teach in competition with each other and the sciences would have a more assured place in the State through having two guardians, so that if one were to lose so sacred a deposit, it might be found with the other'.<sup>20</sup>

This spirit of competition which he desired, but did not further by any practical measures, nevertheless gave the Oratorians and the Little Schools of Port Royal a chance to come to the fore. Though these had fewer pupils, the method of teaching was most effectual. On the whole, thanks to childhood training, a logical outlook was formed that the middle classes welcomed, especially as they recognized its use in their own particular



spheres. In a land where the bourgeois—and especially the civil servant—were protected by the whole political system and by the economic conditions, the sense of moderation which had been instilled by their education counterbalanced the mythological, the imaginative or the fantastic. Of course, at a higher level, that of the élite who were used to indulging in speculation, the Cartesian movement had a profound influence. But this influence itself drew much of its strength from the general feeling of opinion and it would be unjust to forget that the French seminaries had, in a few generations, turned out a clergy which was highly educated, well up in the classics, and capable of dealing with parochial duties which would naturally bring it into contact with bourgeois circles.

There is no doubt that during the seventeenth century the French bourgeois had made great progress and had formed a solid group in society which, both in numbers and quality, was not equalled in many European countries. Their serious turn of mind made them sympathetic to Jansenism. Not that the nobles were indifferent to it, for religious souls who were capable of such thought met irrespective of social barriers. But if one is interested in problems raised by questions of Grace, of a subtlety not covered by the straightforward and concrete answers of the catechism or Divine Service, it is obvious that one must have a thorough knowledge of theology and a familiarity with theological ideas which could only be possessed by the educated classes.

Neither *Augustinus* nor even *Fréquente Communion* were works easily come by or upon which one would lightly embark. The connection between Jansenism and legal circles has been explained by historians in many and very differing ways, but it is clear that it was an urban movement. If the Jansenists retired to country solitude, even if they took to farm work, when they left the town they made certain of taking their libraries with them and still remained displaced town-dwellers. Essentially, Jansenism said that the search for God was by austere paths [67]. Sainte-Beuve, in a page of *Port-Royal*, quotes a whole series of witnesses to show how unreasonable the Jansenists could be in this matter. M. Hamon was apprehensive lest, in a beautiful church, attention might be distracted from pure piety. As he remarked to Mother Angelica on the shocking proportions of a building, she said, 'How much I like that, for if one is not in the least poor, one spends the least possible on show and the semblance of poverty is pleasing.'

M. de Saint Cyran had gone so far as to say 'There is more devotion in listening to Mass said by a shabby priest or one of bad reputation than to one who celebrates Mass with beautiful ornaments on a perfectly arranged altar, or is renowned for his virtue; for in one case all one's faith is occupied by satisfying the senses; in the other case the senses are engaged but often the personality of the priest plays the least part.'<sup>21</sup>

The pleasures of art could not be denounced as a guilty indulgence more absolutely, nor could the assistance which it offers to religious life be more

84 strongly condemned. This could not be more exactly opposed to the feeling of the Baroque. But the Jansenists were not alone in thinking this. Other devout circles never gave up the first austerities of the Counter-Reformation.

They covered up nudes; they were perpetually condemning plays and interfering with the theatres. They considered profane shows to be a constant peril to the emotions and imagination. What a point in common between people who otherwise understood each other so badly—Jansenists and the devout found themselves agreeing with the Protestants, who by now were again a numerous and powerful force in urban France, especially in the towns south of the Loire. A large percentage of the French bourgeoisie in the seventeenth century became more intransigent than ever and would have nothing to do either with Spanish exaltation or with Italian exuberance.

One must recall all these various trends: Europe in great part destroyed by war, impoverished in man power, the old agricultural background taking on a new pattern on the great estates, but a Europe where commercial wealth was becoming more fluid and favouring the rise of the middle classes, a Europe where the monarchical system seemed paramount, with the sovereign gaining in prestige and the State increasing its power. But what a varied picture we get through the superabundance of conflicting and interwoven interests. What single form or mode of expression would become dominant?

The solution offered by Italy was a sumptuous art, and a subtle conception of beauty was able to respond both to the ritualistic religion such as was then practised in Rome and to a hierarchic society where authority was surrounded by pomp. It is understandable that this was pleasing to Catholic countries and to those accepting a monarchical regime, above all in Spain. Though one would expect it to need a foundation of riches, on the contrary we find it spreading through impoverished and poorly inhabited countries where the people welcomed and maintained it because they felt its marvellous glamour and charm. Thus the Baroque was born in Central Europe, where it bore fruit in charming works. Russia was to produce her own hybrid strain. But still Italian prestige was universally recognized. Yet all this was ineffectual when it came to grafting this civilization on to the rich middle-class communities in the north. It was not only because there the Protestant tradition was still powerful; the spirit of the middle classes sought other values than those of imagination and sentiment. It was more realistic and more restrained. Thus, in a country such as France where at the same time you found Catholicism, monarchy, great landowners and an agricultural world but also a large middle class and a powerful Protestant minority, the solution could not be simple.

France, though she wished to learn from Italy, was not going to take anything over wholesale without taking into account her national traditions or the new objections which several large social groups had raised in

opposition to the Baroque taste. Neither royal patronage, nor the fact that most of the people were Catholic meant that the Italian idiom would inevitably be adopted.

That is why the choice of France in literary and artistic taste towards the middle of the seventeenth century takes on an essential importance for the history of civilization. One might say that France had as many reasons to accept as to reject the Baroque and it was this very balance that made her choice so difficult. To a very large extent the future of Baroque would be dependent upon the choice that France made, for France then was in full ascendancy. In spite of all her weaknesses and difficulties, her resources and, a much more important factor, her density of population were making her the first nation in the world. Her government, moreover, could now command the whole nation in pursuance of its policies. She had attained a position which ensured that her ideas would spread throughout Europe. She had taken the lead from Italy; she had created a civilized state very much earlier than the Italians, and was assured of an expanding economy. She had now become so rich in artists and writers that she was looked on as the model for other countries. Now we must look at what France chose to do, how she did it, and why.



## *France between Baroque and Classicism*

RICHELIEU had raised France's prestige abroad. He had also established order at home, which was a first necessity for employment and economic progress. But in order to carry on foreign wars, the Cardinal had demanded a great deal from the nation. He had used force to smash all opposition to remain in power, and the whole of France had bowed before his implacable despotism. But she still remained a living society, made up of diverse groups which all maintained their own individuality, either from provincialism or particularism. Nor was it possible to make her accept any one style in either arts or letters. For a long time critics saw only one aspect of French literature in the time of Richelieu—that it ushered in Classicism. They thought that the Cardinal, by founding the Académie Française, had surely established an institution which could lay down rules and judge the value of works. Nowadays this interpretation has been revised. Works quite alien to the classical spirit have been brought to light—love poems and lyrics, tragi-comedies, farces, pastoral romances or picaresque novels—which still move us and arouse our admiration.<sup>1</sup>

One wonders if, for once, this is a case of Baroque preceding Classicism instead of following it. But really this Baroque is a break away from the earlier classical tradition of humanism and the Pléiade. It is influenced by the affected and erudite style of Italy and Spain. Figures in Italian literature—from *Orlando Furioso* or *Gerusalemme Liberata*—were known to every cultured person. And alongside these great works there were the precious poetry of Marino and the forty-five thousand stanzas of *Adone*. One can perhaps trace the same delicacy of grace and enchantment in the French works. Besides that, most French writers in the first half of the seventeenth century knew Italy and many of them had lived there.

In architecture and painting, tastes and tendencies jostle each other. The vigour of Gothic is not quenched. The Fontainebleau Renaissance (and even a second Fontainebleau Renaissance which flourished under Henri IV and was inspired by the Italian Mannerists) and the classical Renaissance of Lescot were all still influential. The works created in Richelieu's time were



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Simon Vouet's portrait of Louis XIII of France, one of the founders of modern monarchy and supporter of the Counter-Reformation

*Les Misères de la Guerre* engraved by Jacques Callot was a series of scenes from the Thirty Years' War, which plunged Germany into desolation and after which

66

Baroque art developed only in a part of the Empire



Callot inv. et fec.  
 que c'est du monde et combien de hazards  
 ecutent sous fin les enfans du Dieu Mars

Les uns esbropiez  
 Les autres plus heureux s'esleuent a la guerre

Les uns sur un gibet meurent d'un coup fa  
 Et les autres s'en vont du Camp a L'Hosp





This figure of *La Mère Angelique*, by Philippe de Champaigne, interpreted with simple grandeur, could serve as a symbol of the Jansenism which helped to lead French taste back towards logic and simplicity

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One should not look for the origins of Baroque art among the masses, but *The Peasant's Meal*, by Louis le Nain, shows a type of sensitivity which awoke a lasting response among them



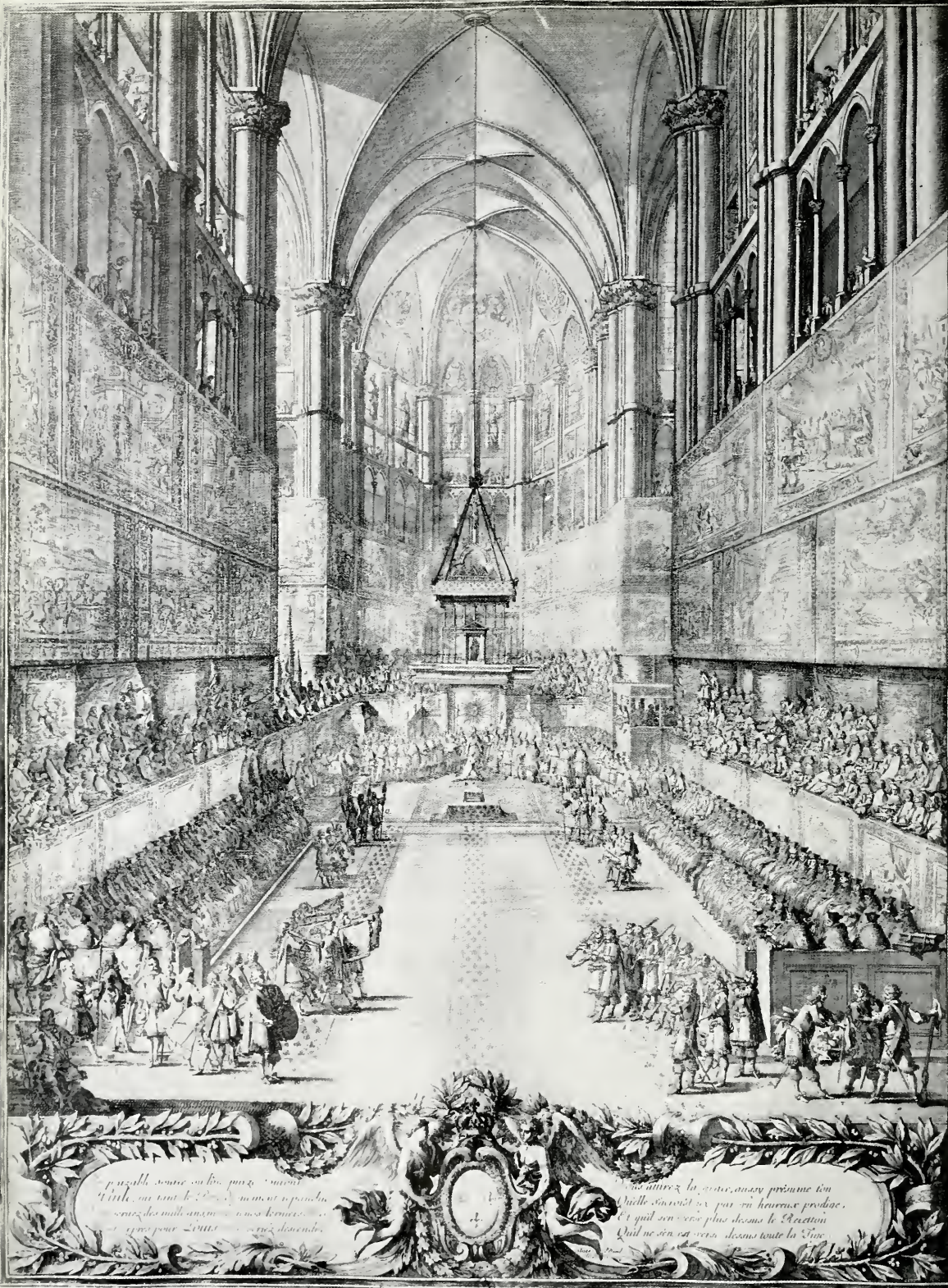
68





*Cardinal Richelieu*, by Philippe de Champaigne, is a fine classical portrait reminiscent of Titian and Rubens, which vividly brings back to life the authority and power of the Cardinal





- 70 Bossuet recalled that, at the Coronation of Louis XIV in Rheims Cathedral, the Church asked God to cause the splendour of the court to fill all who beheld it with awe



beautiful but eclectic. France was then a crossroads where influences from many parts of Europe met.

The Flemish artists were much sought after and formed their own colony in Paris; the artists from Lorraine, who had been inspired by Caravaggio or the Italian Mannerists, were also in favour. Rubens decorated the Luxembourg gallery with an opulent and mythological paean to monarchy. Vouet, who was First Painter to the King, was Baroque, and had spent his formative years in Italy. Poussin was recalled from Rome by Louis XIII, and considering the French circles in which he moved it must have needed superhuman courage to turn away from that brilliant style he could so easily master to give his work that quiet and harmony which make him the master of classical painting. Lemercier, architect to Richelieu, and later Mansard, drew inspiration from Rome for their beautiful domed churches—at the Sorbonne, in its austerity, and at Val-de-Grâce in its richness and freedom.

It seems that in Richelieu's entourage a group of people, Sublet de Noyers and his friends the Fréarts, believed in rules and regulations. They fought and they thought they had won a battle to impose a regular style upon the desire for a more ornate taste, which still remained popular, as well as upon the pleasures of invention to which even so erudite an architect as P. Derand (who designed the façade of St Paul and St Louis) succumbed.<sup>2</sup> But none of these tendencies had carried the day and became dominant, when the Cardinal died.

Mazarin, who succeeded him in power, made every endeavour to woo public opinion, and he thought that to do so life in Paris should be made gay and brilliant, and the capital amused. He himself was used to the Italian crowds, who derived such pleasure from *festas* that the whole town would turn out to enjoy a parade of carriages, or a cavalcade, a tourney or a display of fireworks, or festivities to welcome some distinguished visitor.<sup>3</sup> Of course the French and other nations had their joustings and fairs, but these were simple and barbarous affairs compared to the contrivances of the Italians. For a long time they had been pastmasters in the art and had built up a veritable science to devise machines that could produce wonderful theatrical effects.<sup>4</sup>

Engineers who were engaged on siege work, raising waters or levelling hills, sought after and found all sorts of apparatus which could supersede the ordinary labourer. By the use of cranks it was extraordinary how quickly scenes could be changed and how much could be done simultaneously. Some of them wrote down their discoveries. There was, for instance, Valturio de Rimini, whose *Book of Machines* was published first in 1472 and reprinted in Venice, Verona, Bologna and even in Paris.

It is known that Leonardo da Vinci showed an absolute passion for machines and worked incessantly inventing new ones which should, solely by the use of their elements, enable men to ascend into the air or descend into the water. It has even been asked whether he was searching to give



man the mastery of the universe or whether he was really only worrying about fresh devices to give the Italians new effects of surprise and illusion for their *festas*.<sup>5</sup> At a time when technical activities were not specialized we find an Italian being at the same time a war engineer, clock maker, decorator, artisan and architect. The number of these technicians was so great and their fame so widespread that one finds them employed at all the Italian courts, from Naples to Venice, and foreign monarchs, even from Russia, sought their services. They spread abroad that taste for elaborate theatrical shows with transformation scenes. Instead of the usual backcloth and ordinary decorations (which needed a good deal of willing co-operation from the audience to give any sense of illusion), there were perspectives of such ingenuity that the illusion of depth was absolutely perfect and people moved and flew through the air without anyone being able to guess how it was done. Quite apart from the courts and the aristocratic circles of Florence, Rome, Parma and Modena, the ordinary people, especially the Venetians, were great connoisseurs of these shows. Music added to the effect, and the Italians liked their music lively and colourful, large and varied orchestras, where each instrument kept its individuality, a rapid rhythm, and they liked above all the high voices of the sopranos, whose songs had little to do with the words but became veritable *tours de force*. All this created a disturbing pleasure that really transported one to another world. However clever and subtle the tricks of production were, the result was enchantment and people of every social class could find their artistic feelings aroused and satisfied. The Italian *festas*, Italian music, and the Italian theatre became, in a way, occasions of public rejoicing. The pleasures of other nations were clumsy and heavy jokes by comparison.

Mazarin, a great lover of the Italian theatre, wanted to ensure its success in Paris. For over half a century things Italian had been all the rage in society, which knew well enough the pleasures to be found in Italy. But the Cardinal wished to give the common people a chance to witness what they only knew of by hearsay and could scarcely imagine. The first choice was a *pièce à machines*, the *Finta Pazza* which had been played in Venice in 1641.<sup>6</sup> Giulio Strozzi had written the text, and Saccati had composed the music [73]. It was not an opera, nor a comedy with music, but rather a theatrical fête where the transformations of scenery and the ballets played as important a part as the text or score. The theme was taken from the legend of Achilles, when, disguised as a woman, he tries to flee to escape marrying Deidamis whom he has seduced, but she pretends to be mad (*finta pazza*) and ends by softening his heart. The chief value of the theme was the opportunities it gave for song and dance, and the sudden surprising changes of scenery. The Queen had begged the Duke of Parma for stage technicians, musicians and singers and he sent the best technician that was to be found in Italy, Torelli, a very important man already renowned for his productions in Venice. He was remarkably gifted and was known as a

poet, mathematician, and architect as well as a technician. He adapted the piece to suit the special requirements of the French Court. The little king was to be present, and Torelli added various scenes which would please a child of his age: dances for monkeys, negroes and eunuchs, and to crown all, a ballet of ostriches 'which, by an ingenious device, stretched their necks to drink from a fountain, and a ballet of Indians who put a flock of parrots to flight'. At one moment the scene was in the port of Sciros on the island of Chio, and then, by a bold transformation, one saw at the back the Pont-Neuf, with the statue of Henri IV, the houses of the city and the towers of Notre Dame. The piece was staged in the Petit-Bourbon theatre, close by the Louvre, on 14th December 1645. *La Gazette* praised the ingenuity of Signor Torelli, 'the admirable changes of scene, hitherto unknown in France, which enchant the eyes of our imagination no less than the eyes in our head by their imperceptible movements'. Voiture congratulated Mazarin, 'divine and holy prelate' by whom

... désormais, tant de faces changeantes  
Sont dessus le théâtre et non pas dans l'état:

(Now changes of scene on the stage replace  
The turmoils that used the State to disgrace)

The same year Italian artists who came to Paris created a furore at the Court: first there was Leonora Baroni, whom evil tongues said was an old mistress of the Cardinal, but whom the Queen took into favour, and then there was the castrato Atteo Melani. Society became intoxicated with the Italian songs and found them the height of perfection. At the time the political vicissitudes in Rome had, amongst other things, forced the entourage of Urban VIII to flee to France when they fell into disfavour with Innocent X. First of all the nephews of the late Pope arrived: the Barberini cardinals and the Prince of Palestrina, who had given many superb shows in the palace and theatre which had been built by Bernini. France became the home of three more Italian prelates—Bichi, Bonzi and Ondedei—to whom the Queen gave French bishoprics. The Barberini were eager to encourage the taste for Italian fêtes, and a few months later, on the 13th February 1646, the *Egisto*, an *opéra à soli* by Cavalli, was given in the hall of the Palais-Royal. This hall with its golden balustrade, built by Richelieu's order, was the most beautiful in Paris. For the performance the Queen Regent and Mazarin invited the exiled English Queen Henrietta, Prince Thomas of Savoy and Cardinal Antonio Barberini. It was the Cardinal who persuaded them to go even further and plan a full scale Italian grand opera for the following winter. *Orfeo* by Luigi Rossi with a text by Abbé Buti was chosen and again Italy was asked to send castrati and musicians; all the stars who were famous in Florence or Rome were given leave to go to France for the Queen. The first performance took

place at the Palais-Royal on 2nd March 1647. The rehearsals and preparations had taken so long that it was not until the Saturday evening before Quinquagesima that everything was ready; and Lent was just about to begin. Nevertheless the crowd was so great that some could not find seats and others had to give up the precedence which protocol accorded them to get in at all. The Queen, who wished to take Holy Communion the next morning, did not stay till the end, but she was so pleased with the opera that she paid a second visit on the Sunday evening.

There were many reasons why this opera of Rossi's was popular. The arias, apart from the orchestra, expressed every nuance of the characters and the ear was enchanted by the voice of the sopranos, but it was the richness of the Italian music which added an emotional touch to every situation, and underlined every phrase. A whole new artistic world was revealed. The love of Orpheus and Eurydice was also a subject which gave superb opportunities for transformations of scenery—especially in the third act when Orpheus descends into Hades and comes back into the Scythian desert. Animals were spellbound by his music and even the trees danced. Then, at the end, one saw his lyre ascend to heaven where it became a constellation and expanded into the fleur-de-lys of France. The opera satisfied and to some degree increased the public taste for imaginative and fantastic works, especially amongst the aristocrats. Yet *Orfeo* was not received without reservations. The difficulties of language and the involved plot were the least of these, and were got over by printing a brief résumé for the audience. It was the beginning of a custom that lasted throughout the century and whenever there was a complicated plot or decorations that were full of allusions or too symbolic to be readily understood by the average theatre-goer, the difficulty was easily overcome by supplying a programme text.

Much more important was the fact that certain Parisians felt most uneasy because these shows might lead to a tolerance of sensuality, of the improbable, or of the dangerous and alluring fantasies which seemed to be an essential part of these new shows. With them it did not count for much that the opera enjoyed the patronage of cardinals—one, at least, who was not even a priest. The Catholic Reformation in France had intensified the concept of sin, and even more strongly, that of temptation. It would be wrong to talk of hypocrisy or mere prudery. It was something much more deeply rooted, a Christian feeling of austerity that was shared by Catholics and Protestants and also by many who were neither particularly pious nor zealous, but who were strongly convinced that life was earnest. They were worried about the Queen's behaviour, because they thought it might affect the whole welfare of the nation. The Queen was a widow. And widowhood, at that time had something sacramental about it, which was emphasized in the widows' weeds which were worn. The Queen was pious and furthered good works. She was forty-five years old—which in that age was to be old—but both her charm and her rank made her still attrac-



tive, and exposed her, more than anyone else, to certain risks. It was feared that if she indulged in these shows whose power to arouse the emotions was so suspect, she might be carried away and give cause for scandal. On top of that, the country was at war, and the burden of taxes grew every year more crushing.

The poor, both in the towns and the country, were being ground down to find the money. 'The money which I ask is not to play with nor for idle expenses,' Louis XIII had one day told the Paris Parliament. 'It is not I who speak, but my State.' It was the language of an austere king. But was the money which had been demanded in the name of the State to be idly expended on play-actors and castrati?

Mazarin, in short, politically had failed in his experiment. A few more months and there would be the Fronde, and the Parisian mob would be threatening the Italian artists.

A large section of opinion turned away from these enchantments. Nevertheless in literary circles the writers were inclined to take up the romantic, and when they wrote for the theatre sought the help of transformation scenes. Corneille was most prolific, and turned out a play a year. The comedy *Le Menteur* was followed by the romantic tragedies, *The Death of Pompey*, *Rodogune*, *Heraclius*, and *Théodore*, the story—far too full of peripetia—of a Christian martyr. A few weeks after *Orfeo* had been given, he wrote the tragedy *Andromède*, taking his subject from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. He had got in touch with Torelli and the piece had been written with the stage-effects of the Italian impresario in mind. The play exhibited almost the exact opposite of the unity of place—or as Corneille himself explained: the necessity of placing the various participants in various particular places had made it necessary to expand, a little more than usual, the general place which surrounds them and constitutes a unity.

The scenes change before the eyes of the audience. In the first act the heavens open and (to use Corneille's words) 'let us see in the far distance the star of Venus which machinery will enable to bring the goddess into the centre of the theatre. She comes forward slowly without the eye being able to detect how she is suspended' [76]. The jasmins and myrtles which, in the second act, form a wonderful garden, change in the third act to horrific rocks: Perseus on his horse Pegasus prances around to rescue Andromeda whom the winds have chained there [75]. Choruses added their songs to the recitative. The whole is a very odd work, where Corneille's noble language and the artifices of Torelli are united under the spell of a fable. Indeed the poet admits that his principal aim had been to 'satisfy the eye by the brilliance and variety of scene and not to move the mind by the force of reason or the heart by delicacy of emotion'. He goes on, 'In this tragedy the mechanical devices are not a separate ornament: they are so essential that you cannot take away one without causing the whole structure to collapse. Signor Torelli has himself supervised the execution of the designs and has made admirable inventions to fit them for this purpose.'<sup>7</sup> *An-*

- 92 *dromède* is much more a tragedy with theatrical devices than a tragedy by Corneille, a real collaboration by Corneille and Torelli. In fact the poet was paid 2,400 livres for his part in it and the Italian 12,000. There is little use comparing their salaries, however, since Torelli had to pay the cost of the machines, and the poet incurred no expenses. The piece was not presented on the date that had been planned. A protest from the devout, which was presented to the Queen by St Vincent de Paul, begged her to postpone the show. It was only performed, though with uncurtailed luxury, after the first Fronde had begun, in January 1650, the same month that the Queen, trying to regain power by breaking the league of princes, had ordered the arrest of Condé. In the same way she had hoped in August 1648 to regain power from Parliament. But both of these royal interventions only unleashed civil war.

The war of the Fronde is one of the most difficult periods to understand in French history. There are picturesque and romantic episodes enough: popular uprisings, barricades, the Court in flight, princes imprisoned and escaping, battles, the cannon of the Bastille firing on the royal troops, and princesses of the blood royal or great ladies taking part in the wars as though they were Amazons born. Every social class had some interest in this tragic affair and the varying causes are inextricably mixed. The authority of the king, which was primarily threatened, ended by triumphing, because no single party managed to propound a policy which would rally the others. Nowadays one can appreciate how great the crisis was. The absolute power, which had been built up by Richelieu and continued by Mazarin, was in jeopardy both from the attacks from Parliament and officials; but the principle too was opposed by many privileged groups who defended their traditional rights and liberties. It was the provincial administrators who aroused the greatest bitterness among all those officials who refused to admit as their superiors people who came, armed only with the authority of a commission (but otherwise holding no office), to introduce an entirely new and untraditional element into the administration of the kingdom. It might seem that the Fronde of the Parliament and still more that of the people, who rebelled against excessive taxation, was an expression of the ancient national spirit of independence and liberty when faced with a government which did more to enrich war profiteers and financiers than the country as a whole. But much more was at stake for the State and for France. In spite of all the blunders and injustices of the means employed—and it was impossible during a war and under a regency to make any radical reforms—if the royal power could not regain control, there was no alternative but to slither into anarchy and chaos. And who would gain? The *grande*es, who might combine to fight a minister, were at daggers drawn amongst themselves, and their followers would be dragged into their internecine wars. Perhaps there would be some advantage to the provincial legal and financial officials who then formed a

local aristocracy, but they were authoritarian, obstinate and with no breadth of vision. Above all, Spain would have welcomed and profited most from widespread troubles in France. At the time people referred to 'The Unruliness' (*dérèglement*), and this is significant, because indeed every rule—of behaviour, honour, loyalty to the king, of responsibility of office, or of feudal obligations—seemed to be called in question.

It is quite clear that there was a connection between these events, the general temper of the times, and the hesitations of taste which were apparent both in literature and art during these years. Not that the political factions were reflected in any particular manner. The romanticism and violence of the Frondeurs did not incline them to the Baroque, nor were the classicists all for the restoration of royal authority. That would give quite a wrong impression, for the taste for Italian Baroque was rampant in court circles, and many who favoured the rule of law were to be found in the entourage of the Prince of Condé. But the ups and downs of the struggle, the perpetual denouncing or renewal of alliances, when bitter foes might overnight become reconciled, all created an unreal atmosphere where anything imaginable might happen. The success of the novels of Calprenède and Madame de Scudéry, so different in many ways, showed that the fevered imaginations of the authors, expounded page after thousand pages, answered some restless romantic longing of the people. One could say the same about the taste for heroes and their prowess, or the complex refinements which were in such contrast with the crudities of behaviour engendered by the wars.

In certain literary coteries—those of Montmort, the Abbé de Marolles, the Abbé d'Aubignac, Ménage, or Furetière—the taste for Cartesian thought was growing during these years, together with an interest in science and a preference for lucidity and order in writing. The number of educated people who were capable of putting this into practice had increased in France over two generations, and a public sufficiently informed to take sides in literary quarrels or the quarrel of the styles had grown up.

After the Fronde, life once more became normal in Paris and the minister, who had been so much reviled, was welcomed back with new trust. The court was torn between two tendencies. The misery in the city and its surroundings was widespread and the Queen, both as sovereign and Christian, was much taken up in trying to alleviate it. Largely through the activities of St Vincent de Paul, this became the epoch of charitable works. But public misery did not hinder people enjoying themselves again. The young king was growing up and just at an age to appreciate entertainments. The old court ballets were brought back into favour and made an excuse for using all the new theatrical devices. In 1655 they played *The Nuptials of Thetis and Peleus*, which was a clever combination of opera and ballet with music by Carlo Caproli and text by the Abbé Buti.<sup>8</sup> One could see the characters ride down from the heavens on clouds, the background changed, palaces appeared. In the prologue a mountain moves forward,



and from it descended young noblemen in silken costumes and plumed wigs—amongst them Louis XIV himself, who played the part of Apollo. The young king was also passionately fond of Italian music, although he always kept a Frenchman, Jean de Cambefort, as Master of the Household Music. He enjoyed this life of fêtes and shows; and one wonders if, with the young king enjoying himself and the Queen Mother busy with pious works, the Cardinal had achieved his wish, for he was the only one who really wielded power.

Tuesday 26th August 1660 was a superb day in Paris. The summer sunshine shone brilliantly on a city decorated with triumphal arches for the state entrance of the King and Queen. Thanks to the victories of the army and the diplomacy of the Cardinal, peace was established throughout Europe. France and Spain were reconciled. By the Treaty of the Pyrenees, Philip IV had ceded to Louis XIV Artois and Roussillon, two provinces which rounded off the kingdom and secured its frontiers. He had also offered the hand of the eldest infanta in marriage. In the north the wars that had been dragging on between Sweden and Poland, Brandenburg and Denmark had been halted by the Treaty of Oliva on 3rd May 1660, and that of Copenhagen on 4th June. France had been the mediator.

If one remembers also that Charles II had been restored to the English throne, and was closely related to the French king and was his ally, one can understand the happiness which was felt throughout Europe; it was one of those respites when people really can have faith in the future: no more wars, civil or foreign, and calm on every front. Peace, and that profound love which everyone pretended to believe was the reason of the royal marriage (diplomatic though it might be), were the two themes chosen for the festivities of the city of Paris. For it was Paris that was welcoming the royal pair, that was paying for everything, choosing the decorations and showing its delight by the vast crowds, crammed in every window, jamming the streets and the bridges. Paris was truly expressing what was felt all over France, and the quantities of men and women who had flocked in from the provinces made this evident. The town council could also feel proud of having got everything ready in time, since the government and the Court were both behindhand. In spite of all the efforts of Colbert, the theatre which was being built jointly by Le Vau and the Italian decorator Vigarani in the Tuileries was still not ready and it was impossible to put on the opera *Xerxes* by the most famous Venetian composer, Cavalli.

In May the city had made a contract with the sculptor Regnaudin for statues 'in the best selected stone from Troussy and Saint-Leu', and one with the master-carpenter, Fleurant le Noir, for a triumphal arch 'of pine wood and of the Doric order', according to the designs of Melin, painter to the king. After the entry the arch was to be demolished and the wood taken away by le Noir. The way the Parisian artists and artisans finished their work by a certain day was essential to the hoped-for success. It is cer-

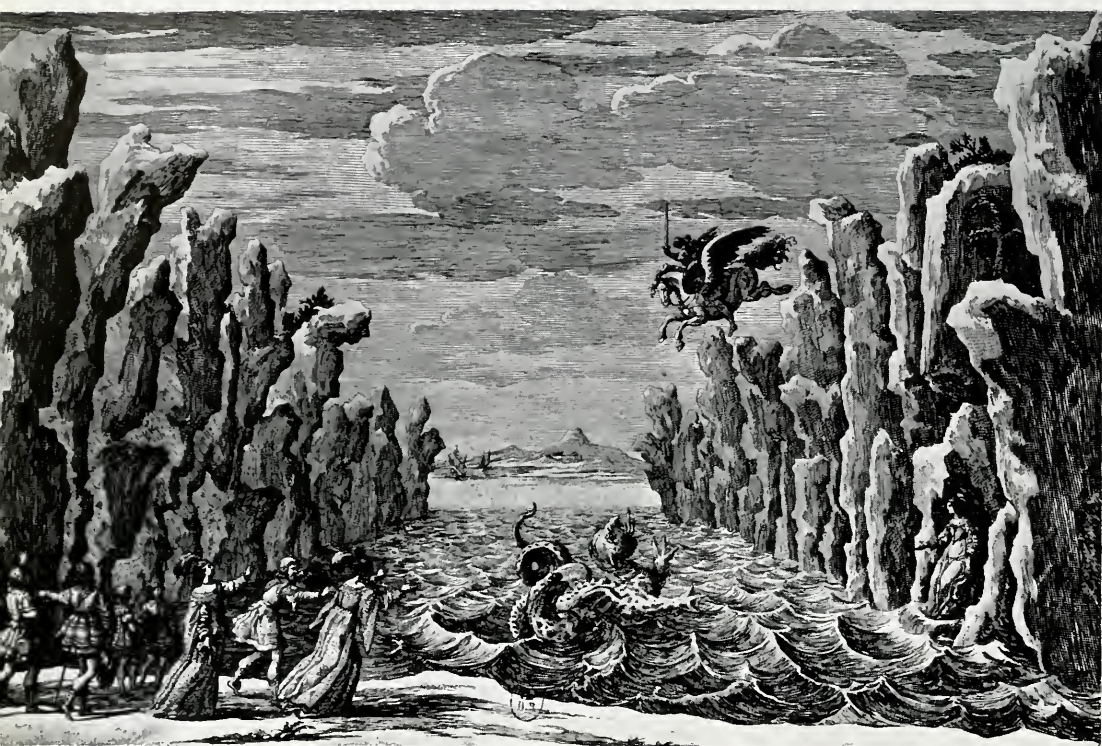
Lemercier, Richelieu's architect, was responsible for the beautiful Chapel of the Sorbonne. Its dome and its austere appeal were both inspired by the churches of Rome



Richer and livelier than the Chapel of the Sorbonne is the Chapel of the Val de Grâce, by Mansart. It was also inspired by Roman models







73

Two decors by Torelli for *Andromède*. Corneille collaborated with Torelli and the resulting play lent itself to the Italian stage technicians' scenic effects. Corneille admitted that his chief aim 'was to satisfy the eye with the splendour and variety of the spectacle, and not to appeal to the mind. . . . This play is intended only for the eye.'



74





- 75 Torelli's decor for *La Finta Pazzo*, in which he was chiefly useful in providing subjects for songs, ballets and transformation scenes  
 Le Vau knew how to combine the appearance of a typical French château with the new demands for both personal comfort and a suitable setting for the entertainments so fashionable at the time, as he has done at Vaux-le-Vicomte







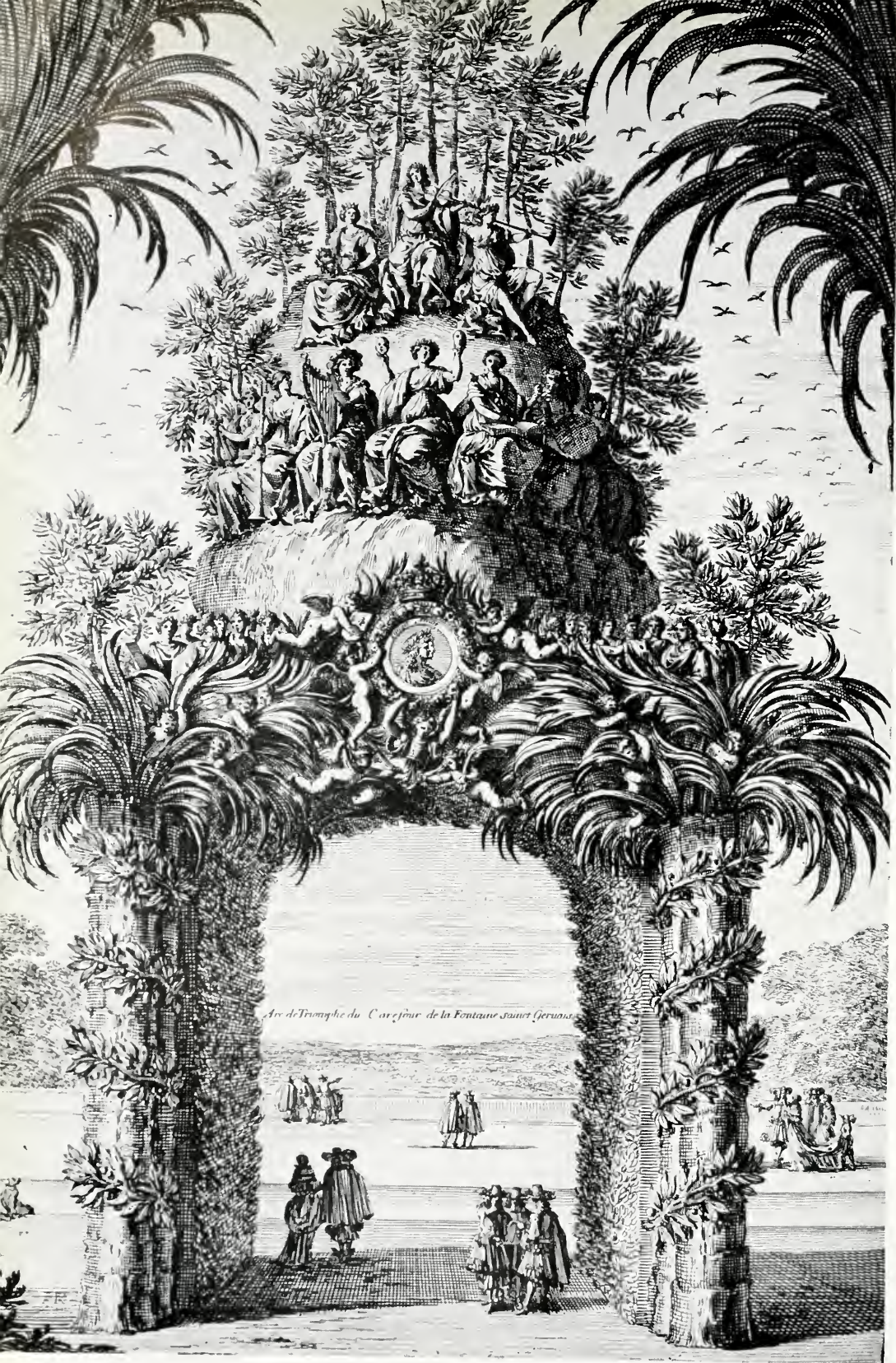
- 77 The Triumphal Arch of the Faubourg St Antoine was built for the fête of August 26, 1660. It tried to give the appearance of stone and was strongly classical in its appeal. A distant forerunner of the Carrousel arch, it claimed to rival 'the greatest of which the ancient world has left fragments'





The stone Triumphal Arch of the Faubourg St Antoine was transformed from an ancient gate restored in the reign of Henri II for the fête of August 26, 1660.





*Arc de Triomphe du Carrière de la Fontaine Saint-Germain*

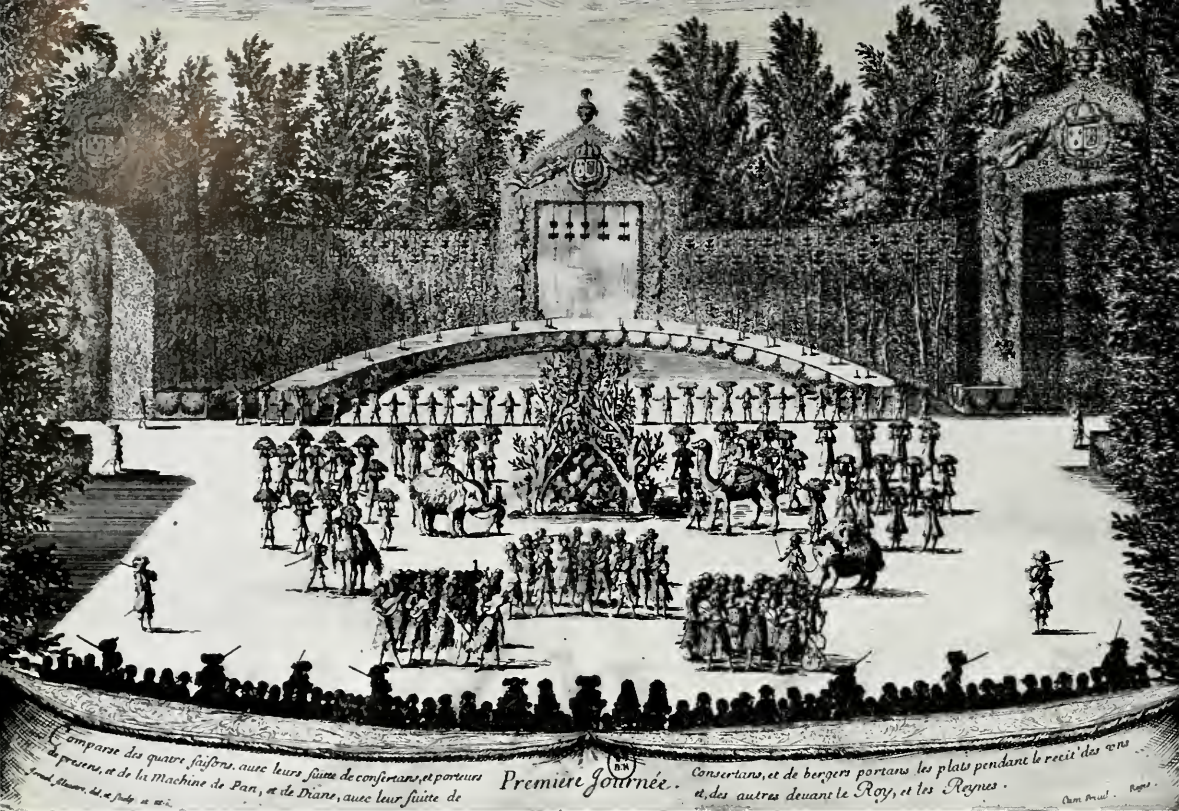


LEFT. The Triumphal Arch of the Fontaine St Gervais represented the Temple of the Muses for the fête of August 1660. The number of characters and the lively way they were depicted made for an extremely complex design

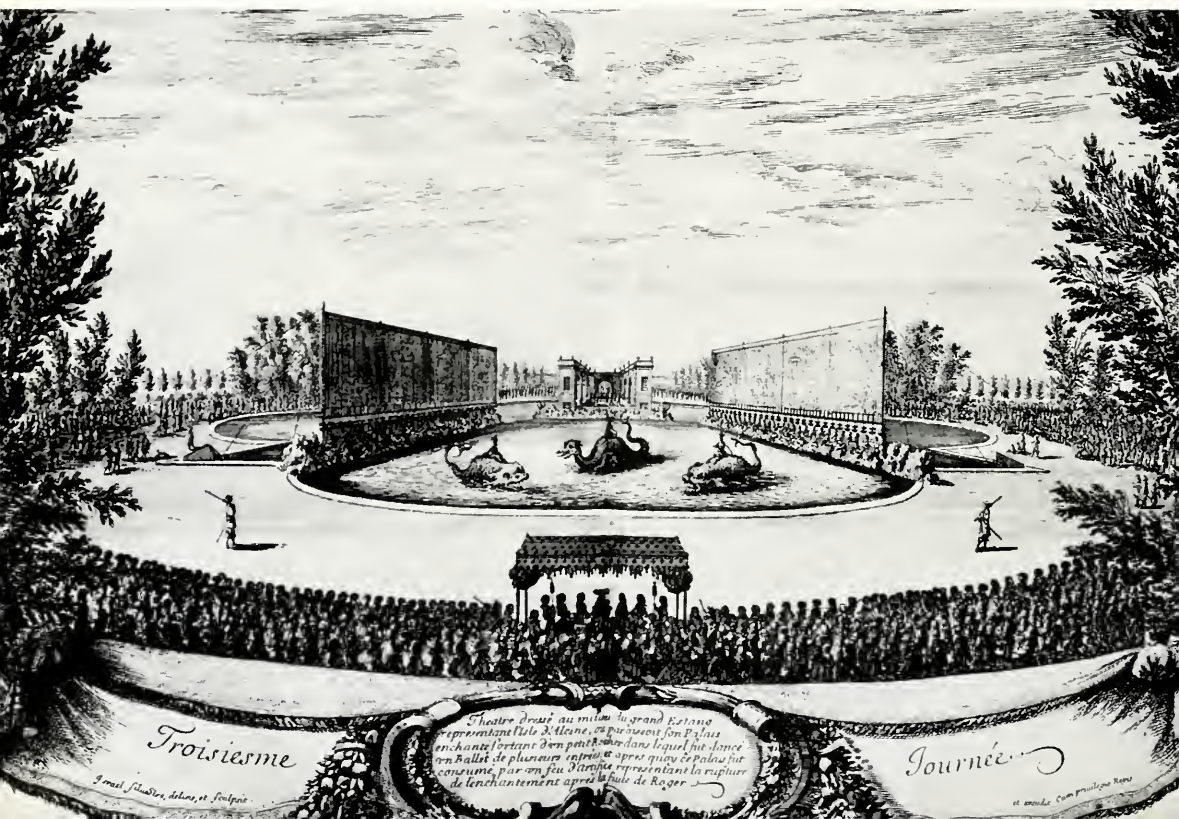


RIGHT. The Triumphal Arch in the Place Dauphine was designed by Le Brun for the fête of August 1660. This arch was a sumptuous contrivance of unprecedented magnificence, surpassing all those the procession had already passed through. It was demolished after the festival





- 81 The Pleasures of the Enchanted Isle unfolded their splendours in the gardens of Versailles from May 1, 1664. At the end of the first day (ABOVE) there was a ballet of the Seasons, with exotic animals, and those who took part carried baskets and bowls for the banquet. The third day (BELOW) was set by a lake. On it can be seen three islands, with a palace on the largest and musicians on the other two
- 82





tainly true, as was written at the time that: 'It could only be Paris, and Paris flourishing as it is today, that is capable of producing enough workmen and the indefatigable supervision of the civil officers perfectly to second the intelligence and zeal of Signor Noblet, architect to the king and overseer of the city buildings.'<sup>9</sup>

The fête was to start outside the walls of Paris, at a short distance from Vincennes, in a large square which for long afterwards bore the name of 'Place du Trône'.<sup>10</sup> There a platform had been built, and a dais, where the King and Queen, attended by the Chancellor of France, were to receive the homage of various corporations ('corps constitués'). Since the procession was expected to last the whole morning, the platform had been joined up to a neighbouring house by a gangway, so that the King or Queen might from time to time snatch some rest. The clergy of the parishes of Paris walked in the procession behind their crosses, chanting the litanies of the saints. Then came the University of Paris, represented by forty-two doctors of medicine, one hundred and sixteen doctors of theology, and six doctors of canon law, all in their robes and ermine hoods. The guilds were led by the Merchants, followed by the six 'corps privilégiés', the judges of appeal, members of the Mint, the board of Excise and the Parliament of Paris. Whenever a group reached the platform, one representative came forward, and knelt before the King to recite a message of welcome. All these speeches were, as might be expected, in praise of peace and the royal marriage, yet in spite of their conventionality one could feel they expressed a sincere and profound feeling—the poignant longing of the Parisians for peace, after so many years of misery. On such an occasion one would expect to, and of course did, find declarations that His Majesty would win more great victories and continue in his career as a conquering hero, but there was a subtle undertone which stressed that, by curbing his legitimate ambitions and making peace, he had conferred the greatest of blessings on his people.

The Provost of the University of Paris had to admit with regret that his guild was no longer, as in the past, the happiest and most powerful of all, but he stressed that it was still the most zealous in its devotion to the sovereign. He added that he found himself incapable of dividing his praises between the King and the Queen. The same thanks must be offered to them both, since all Frenchmen owed to them equally 'all worldly goods, life, leisure, security, peace, and in that one word all was summed up, nothing more left to be said'.

The Provost of the Guilds spoke even more directly: 'Moreover Sire, we still do not hide from you the fact that your exploits in war are far less agreeable to us than your achievements in peacetime. And, if one may go further without hurting your pride, they are even less to your credit. Yes, Sire, those who acknowledged the true puissance of your arms, though nevertheless resisting it, now in peacetime bring you their love, which cannot be won by force, in true obedience; and those who were

96 most opposed to the grandeur of Your Majesty come to offer the greatest and best love that they have.'

The Civilian Lieutenant of the Paris Law Courts declaimed: 'Posterity will view with amazement the immense successes which were within your grasp, when Your Majesty so wisely chose moderation, and preferred the advantages of peace to the certain conquest of so many provinces.'

Last of all, the President of the Mint suggested that the great love which the King bore the Queen had led him to make peace, and achieve the greatest good, while the President of the Excise exclaimed: 'We cannot thank Your Majesty enough for the two great gifts which you have bestowed on the country: the Queen, and Peace.'

It was two o'clock in the afternoon when a new procession, the cavalcade of the Court, moved on towards the town. The household of Mazarin, those of the King and those of the Queen, the horses of the Royal stable, the Chancellory, marched past. Then followed the Chancellor Séguier, wearing the golden robes of office, a black velvet hat with a gold tassel, such as we see in the portrait by Le Brun. He rode a white horse. Four pages and six equerries, dressed in satin and velvet, surrounded him, and two of them held violet parasols of watered silk to protect him against the sun.<sup>11</sup>

Then came the musketeers, the light-horse, the *prévôté de l'hôtel* the governors, the officers of the crown, and last of all the King himself, his dress sparkling in the sun. He was followed by several noblemen, his brother, and the princes of the blood. With them was Condé, who had now been restored to favour. The King seemed now to be the leader of that very same nobility, which, had so short a time ago, believed itself strong enough to venture on a last feudal war. Now they were tamed.

The Queen appeared in an open carriage. Though she was not beautiful, her youth at least could be admired, and the gentleness of her expression, and her golden hair. In an account of the day written in light verse by Père Gaussart, she is described thus:

Let us watch the Queen go by  
So beautiful, so beautiful is she!  
Surely she is a goddess  
A light shines from her eye  
As she passes by.<sup>12</sup>

The princes of the House of Lorraine, Guise and Elbeuf, with the Spanish ambassador, formed her personal escort.

The procession took four hours from the Place du Trône to the Louvre, going round by the Ile de la Cité. It passed under triumphal arches which boasted all that the good taste and artistic resources of the Paris of the times could produce.

One of the first of the arches—the one constructed by Fleurant le Noir



from a design by Melin—stood in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, close by the abbey of Saint-Antoine-des-Champs [77].<sup>13</sup> It was of wood, though it looked like stone. Between six Doric columns were three arches whose vaults had sunken panels decorated with heraldic roses. The columns supported a frieze and entablature. The metopes of the frieze displayed alternately the fleur-de-lys and the tower of Aragon. Above the main arch, the entablature, a large Latin inscription in letters of gold, offered the greetings of Paris to the monarchs.<sup>14</sup> Above the lateral arches were a sun, in honour of the King, and a moon, symbol of the Queen. Under the frieze, inscriptions testified to their merits.

Postquam terribili vicit rex omnia Marti  
Vincere quem posset Mars super unus erat.

(After the King had conquered all things in a terrible war, Mars (war itself) was the only thing left to conquer.)

Victorem martis praeda spoliisque superbum  
Vincere quae posset sola Theresa fuit.

(Theresa alone is able to conquer the conqueror of Mars, laden with spoils and booty.)

Along the entablature stood a collection of statues representing Faithfulness, Obedience, Joy, Gratitude, Concord, Constancy, each one with its appropriate symbols. Any cultured man of the time would be familiar with mythological allusions and had a taste for symbolism. But this sometimes was so refined that it became little more than an affected riddle. Since expert knowledge was essential to unravel these mysteries, pamphlets were distributed to the public explaining the décor, and giving translations or paraphrases of the Latin inscriptions. So it is quite probable that the good people of Paris, and even the militia whose duty was to keep order, had found time to study the various arches, and, if they had studied diligently, might have understood the full meaning of the fête.<sup>15</sup>

The arch of the Faubourg—60 ft wide and 48 ft high—was of a strongly classical design and obviously had been inspired by Rome. It was an early forerunner of the present day Carrousel, and openly professed to rival 'the greatest ruins of antiquity'. An internal staircase made it possible for oboists to reach the entablature and from there greet the King and Queen with a serenade.

The procession wound on to the Bastille. The bridge had been decorated with statues of Hercules and Pallas carved in stone, ordered for the occasion from Regnaudin. Then, further on they came to an arch which really was built in stone. It was the Porte Saint-Antoine, which had been restored by Henri II [78].<sup>16</sup> His cypher was still visible, but the classical flavour of the original had been completely transformed by new orna-

98 mentations designed to impress on the spectators the greatness of Paris. Solidity and magnificence had therefore to be combined.

Round the central arch and upon the uprights there was superb rustication and the keystone had become a bust of Louis XIV, carved after a sketch made by Poussin.

Paci  
 Victricibus Ludovici XIV. Armis  
 Felicibus Annae consiliis Augustus M. Theresae nuptiis  
 Assiduis Iulii Cardinalis Mazarini curis  
 Partae. Fundatae. Aeternum firmatae.  
 Praefect. urb. aedilisque Sacravere Anno MDCLX

(To the Peace gained by the victorious arms of Louis XIV, the wise counsels of Anne (of Austria) the august marriage of Marie-Thérèse, the diligent help of Julius, Cardinal Mazarin, obtained, founded, and forever confirmed, this arch is consecrated by the Provost of the Merchants' guilds and the Town Councillors of Paris, in the year 1660.)

The central design was crowned by a large triangular pediment which bore the entwined arms of the King and Queen; on each incline reclined statues of France and Spain; at the apex Hymen stood up to hold a golden kerchief and flaming torch—a work executed by Van Obstal. The side pillars had two big niches. One housed a statue of the Hope of France (*Spes Galliae*); the other one of Public Safety. Both these were the work of Anguier. The boat, the symbol of Paris, was above, and the outside pillars were surmounted by pyramids, crowned by golden fleurs-de-lys. The old gate of the town, which was quite near, was merely covered with tapestries and with a picture of the Corps Municipal standing before the King, while the Queen appeared in the sky as a goddess.

The procession followed the Rue Saint-Antoine into what is now the Rue François-Miron. Here it stopped before the mansion that had been built by Lepautre five years earlier, for Queen Anne's faithful lady-in-waiting, Madame de Beauvais, née Catherine Bellier. Its façade is now ruined, but the staircase and the courtyard still rank amongst the finest examples of work of this date. In 1660 the court had a magnificent balustraded balcony and above this, in honour of the occasion, a special dais had been erected. Here Queen Anne sat in august company, with her sister-in-law the Queen Mother of England, Turenne, and Cardinal Antonis Barberini. Mazarin was also there, though he was too ill to take part in the procession. Yet, as he saw it pass by, he would surely have enjoyed it as a sign of the triumph of his policy, and could admire the fête in itself—it was in so many ways Italian and Baroque, and was taking place in the town which had so hated him that it had twice banished him.

A few steps away there was another triumphal arch standing before the cemetery of Saint-Jean, at the crossroads of Saint-Gervais [79]. This one



showed the Temple of the Muses. It was extremely complex. It had a large number of statues, many of them in most lively poses. At its base there yawned a wide grotto; its pillars were garlanded with laurels from top to bottom. In the centre, a large oval-shaped medallion, surmounted by the Crown, framed portraits of the King and Queen in profile, with the legend: *Jungit Amor*. A gigantic Virtue held it at arms' length, while a little higher Eros and Anteros, the God of Love and the God of Love Rewarded, faced each other, and balanced the design. Everywhere there was a confusion of angels, of quivering wings and legs to be seen amid the palms. In the background were famous writers of all ages amongst olive groves. Higher up, a small mountain was encircled by the seven muses, with Thalia in the centre wearing her masks, to form the last storey. But this was crowned by Apollo, his forehead decorated with laurels, playing on the viol between Calliope and Clio.

The poetry of this elaborate symbolism had been chosen to link the glory of literature with the triumph of mutual love. When the King and Queen arrived a choir sang the hymn which du Mont had composed after the words of the Abbé de Boisrobert.

Come O glorious Queen,  
To receive our good wishes and give us our Laws,  
Come and reign over the hearts of all Frenchmen  
And abandon without regret the fine title of Infanta  
In the arms of the most handsome of Kings.  
See him, in his resplendent majesty  
This spouse famed for his glorious feats  
Who has at last fixed his choice on you.  
Come and put an end to the long wait of his delighted subjects  
And reign over the greatest of Kings.

Going then by the Rue Tissanderie and the Rue de la Vannerie, the procession reached Notre Dame, and at the entrance, a concert of bagpipes gave an unexpected pastoral touch to the fête. Normally the bridge, built up with houses on both sides, was the most congested part of Paris. Its decoration on that day turned it into a pleasant gallery. Termes had been made by the sculptor Vion and, to honour the sexes equally, male and female statues lined the bridge, so that with their outstretched arms, they joined each other as though in a dance. It is probable that they all wore large medallions bearing the names (in Latin) of all the French kings.

The Protestants of Paris must have appreciated the motto of Charles IX: '*Justitiam pietas acuit*' ('His piety sharpened his justice'). The date was that of the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew.

At the end of the bridge that led to the Cité, the triumphal arch that had been planned by the Beaubrun brothers, had as its theme '*Et Mars quoque cessit Amori*'. It consisted of an arch of Ionic order (to evoke feminine

charm) and a large entablature. Draperies, held up by bows, framed a large picture of Mars vanquished, and a small scoffing Cupid, both of whom are looking at the portraits of the King and Queen. On both sides of the picture were statues of white marble, painted and half concealed by the drapery. They represented Fecundity and Honour. Above the draperies two reclining statues symbolized Conjugal Fidelity and Union, with hearts threaded on the same string, and between them a little Cupid brandished the arms of the King and Queen.

The procession crossed over to the other side of the island, until it reached the *Marché-Neuf*.<sup>17</sup> It then turned to the right, followed the embankment for a while, then turned again to reach the *Place Dauphine*. The *Marché-Neuf* was decorated by a big portico in the Italian style, which was the work of Dorigny and Torteбат. Its wings, with twisted columns for the arch, made a concave design rather reminiscent of the façade of Sant' Agnese. A garland of cooking pots hung from the balustrade. In the centre two draperies, surmounted by the stern of a great ship, the symbol of Paris, were drawn apart to reveal a picture of Hercules, looking like the King, being disarmed by a Minerva who portrayed the Queen. Little Cupids were stripping the hero of his attributes, and Mercury, who represented Mazarin, seemed to congratulate him on having yielded to Minerva. From heaven this fairy-tale spectacle was looked upon by St Louis and Blanche de Castille, sitting on clouds. The sentiment already expressed in the stone inscription of the arch of the *Faubourg Saint-Antoine* was again echoed here.

But this mixture of sacred and profane art caused criticism among the devout, who found it sacrilegious; also the doctrinaires denounced it for flouting the classical rules of unity which all good compositions should follow. The reaction was so strong that even in 1662 we find *l'Auteur de la Relation* defending the organizers of the fête against this charge. According to him 'this licence is sufficiently justified by the works of Raphael who can undoubtedly stand as an example to the most illustrious'.

The *Place Dauphine* had been turned into a vast amphitheatre, and here also was the last triumphal arch [80]. Its magnificence and its ingenuity far surpassed all the preceding ones. In its conception and execution Le Brun here showed how great he could be. The grandiose he enhanced by his imagination. His sensitivity, his good taste, his Italian training, now, with his enthusiasm for France and the King, called forth his utmost powers. He had wanted the arch at the end of the *Ile* to be a hundred feet high—a gigantic gate to the *Cité*, the heart of historical Paris. But the door had to be an open one so that through its arch could be seen the bronze horse, the *Pont-Neuf* and the *Seine* flowing by the *Louvre*. Above the arch stood an obelisk, much in the Roman taste, which liked to use relics of the Egyptian or earlier civilizations as ornaments. The obelisk was silhouetted against the sky, like a 'starry pointing pyramid'. Furthermore 'if the whole structure of this arch was built in one, it could nevertheless be considered like



two parts joined together', for the arch stood for the people, and the obelisk for the King. The lower part was the base of the obelisk, 'in the same way that the people were the base and foundation on which was erected the monarchy'.

The main theme of all the decorations on this day had been the glorification of the marriage and the new peace. But sometimes it took on a broader significance; recent events were compared with the great deeds of antiquity which had shaped the world. But, though it might seem to be the last stanza of a poem in praise of France and the Monarchy, it was merely the funeral ceremony of a phase—new glories in a new age were to be expected. Such anyway is the meaning given in a small booklet probably written by Félibien<sup>18</sup> and dedicated to Mazarin.

The arch seemed to be made of white marble. On each side two figures of Termes painted in bronze were holding hands. They echoed the theme of marriage: Fire reconciled with Water, and Air with Earth, elements which, according to the ideas of the time, were in natural harmony with the four humours of which man was composed. 'But peace can triumph only through the victory which it has obtained over the humours of the various peoples.'

Le Brun had lived four years in Rome, from 1642 till 1646. That was too early for him to have seen the fountain of the Piazza Navona, which with its four streams, representing the four quarters of the world, was also cosmic in its symbolism.

He had nevertheless been nurtured on the Italian ideal. His fine composition, logical yet filled with mystery, full of detail, but showing an overall nobility of design, keeps us, when looking at his work, to essentials. It has not that tormented look which one can see in the Navona fountain designed by Bernini. It could justifiably be labelled Classicism. But it would be to mistake the character of this Classicism if one were to connect it with the antique or the doctrinaire and ignore how much the exuberant spirit of Italian Baroque enlivens and nourishes it.

Above the entablature a sham tapestry in a frame with a pediment showed the King and Queen in a chariot driven by Hymen. On both sides of the tapestry, statues of Piety and Gentleness represented the Queen Mother and the young Queen respectively. These statues were painted in natural colours. Piety was dressed in a wide purple mantle adorned with gold, and held aloft a flaming heart. With the other hand she pointed out a pelican tearing out its heart to feed its young. Close by, a cowering wolf represented Impiety Conquered. On the pediment of the frame stood Atlas, holding up a blue globe decorated with golden fleurs-de-lys, which the spirits of France and Spain help him to support amongst the trophies and the flags. Fame flies above them, blowing a trumpet. The obelisk was in part hidden by this decoration on the sides, but it was by no means spoiled by that. Its elegant shape soared up, bearing two golden reliefs which portrayed the almost miraculous birth of the King, and his marriage which

102 had brought back the redemption of peace. At the apex was a statue of Eternity.

On the side of the obelisk which faced the Seine a Latin inscription, composed by Père Gaussart, extolled the superb successes of the royal policy. In order to read it, one had to stand at the foot of the statue of this great ancestor. He also had brought peace to his kingdom after civil and foreign wars, but his young heir had been able to extend it to the whole of Europe, which was a far greater achievement.

Manus uterque suis pacem dedit: alter et orbi  
Arbitruis pacans omnia regna suis.

(Both gave to their people the benefits of peace: but the second to the world as well, leaving only his authority in other kingdoms.)<sup>19</sup>

Since these monuments of painted canvas and sham stone were broken up the next day, the revels and merry-making which marked the occasion were soon forgotten, and historians have, in fact, rather unjustly tended to ignore them. It gave an idea of the situation of the country at that particular time, of what was fashionable in Paris, and also shows us how great were the intellectual and artistic resources of France. It does not deserve to be forgotten. It was an expression of one of the most powerful States in Europe, and of a people who, in spite of the sufferings of a long war and of an attempted revolution, were now rejoicing in the future. It was not a court function. In Paris this fête reflected the national feeling. Its gaiety and spontaneity could only have come from a mature civilization; one can think of no other European city that could have staged such a demonstration.

Though indeed Rome, Venice and Florence possessed more masterpieces, their populations were small and, on the whole, incapable of serious thought. None of them was a capital city with a great kingdom depending on it. If fashion had often mirrored the ideas of Italian Baroque, and still hesitated between the modern trend and ancient doctrine, it would soon find its own idiom. All this décor indeed seems to be only a rough sketch for the great work which follows, a fragile forerunner of something permanent: the lath and plaster would soon be translated into stone.

After Le Brun's arch, the cortège reached the King's palace, which was a curious mixture of medieval and modern. It was not worthy of a great prince, and could only be a temporary resting-place. One wonders what this young king, who still left the reins of government in the hands of an old minister, would remember of his day's triumphal ride through his capital. Would he understand the fervent wish for peace so clearly expressed by his people; would he follow Henri IV's example and dedicate his life to the unexciting tasks of peacetime?<sup>20</sup>

After the Fronde, many of the evils which it had fought came back again, more formidable than ever. The State had not made any thoroughgoing reforms. This was probably not possible anyway while general con-



ditions remained the same, and there was no change in the economic structure of the country. Famines, largely caused by the lack of any organization in distribution, continued. There was a terrible one in 1662. The income of the State was dangerously below its expenditure, and since recourse to expedients was essential, the financiers had to be humoured, for without them, debts could not be met. But they were permitted to take scandalous advantage of their position. For the time being public opinion was lulled by hopes of a better future. Still embezzlements continued; they were, in fact, inherent in the system. Only thus could one explain the fabulous fortune amassed by Fouquet, the Attorney-General of Paris, and Superintendent of Finance. He was certainly not more dishonest than many others, nor less good a servant of the State and the Prince, but his taste for luxury and the opportunities that were so readily available made him indiscreet. His downfall had already been decided by a group of enemies, headed by Colbert, long before Mazarin died.<sup>21</sup> Fouquet was a rich nobleman, who had a passion for buying up land and objets d'art, and also for building. His ambition was to erect a really princely palace on his demesne at Vaux-le-Vicomte, which was to be built by Louis Le Vau and the grounds to be laid out by Le Nôtre. Le Vau drew his inspiration both from the French Renaissance and the examples he had seen of Italian work—he was at the same time a traditionalist and an innovator. This enabled him to design a château such as every Frenchman dreamed of, but one which was comfortable and also adapted to the continual festivities and entertainments which were then in fashion [74]. The layout of the grounds and terraces provided a worthy setting for the magnificent oval salon which was the central feature of the château: a pavilion, two storeys high, crowned by a dome and an elegant lantern. The ceiling was to be painted by Le Brun.<sup>22</sup>

But even before the building had been completed, it was obvious that the cost would far exceed the estimates, and visitors to Vaux may well have marvelled at the immense riches one could command—if only one controlled the Treasury. There was no question of petty pilfering from national investments, but a subtle game of bribes, the perquisites of office, a percentage offered on a sale or a purchase—the whole thing was quite beyond the comprehension of any layman, but nevertheless, something very suspicious.

Hoping to please the King, Fouquet gave a magnificent party in his honour at the new château. Even foreigners were included in the invitation list 'to meet the greatest King in the world'.<sup>23</sup> It was, almost to a day, one year since that triumphal, joyful but nevertheless extremely significant and rather earnest welcome had been given to Louis XIV as he entered Paris.

The celebrations that took place on 17th August 1661, were quite different. There was nothing serious here: pleasure reigned supreme. Both eye and ear were enchanted. Fountains played, and the ingenuity of

Torelli managed to give the alleys a continual variety. There was music by the young Florentine composer, Lulli. There was a play, *Les Fâcheux*, by Molière; there was a banquet prepared by Vatel, which was in itself a masterpiece. As night fell there were the illuminations and a display of fireworks—nothing was missing to make this a completely fairytale scene with harsh realities quite banished. It was, also, a fête in honour of a peerless sovereign, who

In fulfilment of his duties and in private life  
Was noble in action and noble in taste.<sup>24</sup>

The poet went on to remind the King that he was almighty. This praise must even then have struck Louis as rather ironic. Mazarin had died six months ago, and since then Colbert had made it quite plain to the King that there was no money to meet the festivities which he so enjoyed.

It is difficult to understand Louis XIV's reactions at this time. He was worried by two problems, which to us, looking back, may seem quite contradictory, but may not have appeared so to him. He had to pacify the kingdom and set it on its feet again by furthering hard work and austerity. At the same time he must impress the people with his power, his still youthful vigour, and his grandeur.

It would be a great mistake to think of the splendid, rather Italianate fête which the King enjoyed at Vaux as flouting the poverty-stricken classes. It is also unjust to think of the quarrel between the King and his minister as one in which a megalomaniac fought against a sagacious and experienced man. Fouquet had only done what Louis XIV himself would have liked to do.

The way he ordered the arrest of Fouquet, indeed, shows up the King as a most unsympathetic character, though he was, on the whole, an honourable and noble man.<sup>25</sup> But it was not merely a question of Fouquet. He was a scapegoat for a whole group, all of them building ostentatiously in the grand manner. There was Lambert, who had grown rich in the Ministry of Finance. He had also employed Le Vau to build him a magnificent house on the Ile St Louis which was to be decorated by Le Brun. There was Groyen des Bordes, who built a charming house nearby which was later known as Lauzun. There was Bordier, whose château at Raincy boasts the earliest oval salon. Then there was Servien, who remodelled the château at Meudon.

This frenzy for building had at least one thing to be said in its favour—it kept artists and craftsmen in Paris and put them on their mettle. Architects, painters, decorators, actors, poets and musicians (whether Italian or French) rivalled and hated one another. But it meant that they worked hard, and that their work was first class.

The arrest of Fouquet came like a clap of thunder out of a blue sky. It was one of the grossest miscarriages of justice ever perpetrated in France. But there was no particular reaction against the sort of entertainment that



Foucquet had put on for the King, no setback to any fêtes, and it had no importance in the battle of styles. It simply meant that the King, and the King alone, could put on an entertainment on such a lavish, such an ostentatious scale.

There were a few of those whom Foucquet had befriended who remained loyal to him, but to make a living one had to keep in touch with royalty, so most of the minister's followers went to make their court to Louis XIV.

The following winter saw a revival of festivals which were liked by the populace just as much as they were by the courtiers. In addition, the theatre in the Tuileries which Mazarin had hoped to be open when Louis returned to Paris was, at last, finished. It had been built by Le Vau on lines indicated by the Vigarani, so that it could incorporate the latest theatrical devices and stage machinery. The King could now boast of having, in his own palace, a modern theatre which rivalled the ones that the Duke of Parma and Modena had built or even the famous theatre in Venice. Both the Court and Paris were proud of it for, in spite of the Parisian's love of plays, the capital had not many theatres. The splendid Hall of Richelieu in the Cardinal's palace (now the Palais-Royal) could be used, and there were stages in the Hôtel de Bourgogne and the Salle du Marais. But since the Petit-Bourbon had been demolished to enlarge the Louvre, that was all.<sup>26</sup>

On the 27th February 1662, the court was invited to see an opera-ballet *Ercole amante* by Cavalli.<sup>27</sup> Once more the libretto had been written by the Abbé Buti, and Lulli had composed the dance tunes. Cavalli's score was both witty and beautiful, worthy of a composer who (as Romain Rolland pointed out) dominated the whole of Italian opera during the seventeenth century, even Monteverdi not excepted. The Vigarani, who produced it, employed all the theatrical machinery to the full: a globe descended bearing fifteen people, processions were seen passing through the skies, and a boat was swallowed up in a storm. The prologue was once again an eulogy of the royal marriage, and in the final ballet both the King and Queen themselves took part.

Parisian critics did not, however, give it a very good reception. The ballets were praised more than the opera, perhaps because of contemporary taste, or it may have been that the acoustics of the theatre were so bad that listening to the music was a strain. But it was quite evident that the public was again turning against the Italians, no matter whether they were composers, singers, scene designers or just simple artisans. It had happened before, fifteen years ago, when *Orfeo* had been produced. Then there had been a rumour that the fire in the Louvre, which had destroyed the Galerie des Rois a year before, had been started by Italian workmen.

The fall of Foucquet had affected both Torelli and the castrato singer Atteo Melani. The hands at the Marais theatre were themselves expert in the use of all theatrical machinery, and they led the attack against the Vigarani.

Italian opera was denigrated by Cambert, a musician who claimed that he could write in a style much better suited to French taste: musical comedy which gave an opportunity to include more songs. Then Lulli, who at that time had made no great impression in Court circles, was quite ready to desert his countrymen and join the anti-Italian party. He did not possess Cavalli's gifts, neither his power of invention nor his beautiful melodic line. He had, however, a facile imagination and a great ability to learn from other people's work.

When he was searching for a style that would combine the best qualities of French and Italian music he first favoured the French. Certainly he managed to enchant the King by the elegance of his compositions for and his direction of ballets. By 1661 he had been appointed Master of the Chamber Music, and been granted naturalization papers. Then, just as *Ercole amante* had been taken off as a flop, Lulli turned his back on his Bohemian past and married the daughter of the musician Lambert. The marriage was witnessed by both the King and the Queen.

Yet however much Louis may have enjoyed the ballet or theatre it was not enough for him, and he became more and more infatuated with the idea of transforming Versailles, then little more than a simple and unimpressive little hunting lodge that had been built by his father four leagues away from Paris.

It was in 1664 that he decided to invite the Court to Versailles to enjoy 'the pleasure of unusual entertainments'. Perhaps it was to erase the memory of the great fête which Foucquet had staged at Vaux, but it was without doubt to be an apotheosis of Louis XIV in his youth and glory, the young sovereign who was so feared that even the Pope and the King of England had surrendered when there had been a quarrel about etiquette.

He was too, as everyone knew, a happy lover. His affair with Mademoiselle de la Vallière was countenanced even by the Queen Mother, who was noted for her piety, and by the Queen herself, in spite of her love for Louis. They were resigned to the fact, which was everlastingly repeated, that the King was supreme and his every whim must be indulged.

*Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée* (*The Pleasures of the Enchanted Isle*)—as the fête was called—began on the 7th May in Versailles.<sup>28</sup> Three days of cavalcades, plays and ballets—all based on one theme—*Roland Furieux*—were the main entertainment. The scene was the palace of the sorceress Alcine who held Roger and his companions prisoners, until the spell was broken by Angélique's ring. The Duke of Saint-Aignan, as first gentleman of the bedchamber, was entrusted with the supervision of the whole, but almost certainly Vigarani was employed, since people still turned to Italy both for subject-matter and for stage management.

The first day began with a cavalcade of nobles in fancy dress riding through part of the park which had been specially laid out for the occasion. The King himself took the role of Roger and as he and the chief noblemen appeared they were introduced by the recitation of short verses. Then fol-

lowed a vast chariot of Apollo, drawn by four horses abreast, which was 'dazzling with gold, brass, iron and silver', and further decorated with sea monsters which were emblematic of the god. The charioteer was Old Father Time. After that came the main procession of the day, immediately followed by one representing the twelve Signs of the Zodiac. Then pages filed past with their emblems, and some shepherds. When each group had taken up its place they formed a great circle. Then facing the two Queens, Apollo and the Centuries recited poems, composed by Benserade in honour of the King and Queen.

There was one very curious allusion in Apollo's declamation about the rights over Spain's possessions which the Queen's children would possess. The fête was not apparently mere pleasure but an occasion to avow world-wide political ambitions.

The thousand divers climes we see under the rule  
Of those demi-gods from whom she traces her birth,  
Yielding to her merits as much as to their duty,  
They will one day be united under her might.  
The grandeur of France and of Spain,  
The rights of Charles V and Charlemagne,  
Their blood through her happily transmitted,  
Will make the whole world submit to her throne.

After that came some tilting at the ring which was won by the brother of the King's mistress—the Marquis de la Vallière. After the tilting, the Seasons and the Signs of the Zodiac danced a torchlight ballet (*ballet aux lumières*). Then back came the Seasons: Spring on horseback, Summer riding an elephant, Autumn a camel, and Winter on a bear [81]. Then gardeners, harvesters, grape-gatherers and hoary old men with icicles, again symbolic of the Seasons, brought up baskets and dishes for the buffet. At this point Pan and Diana arrived 'on a most ingenious machine, in the shape of a little hill shaded by several trees'. The astonishing thing was that 'it was seen in the air, without displaying the mechanism which made it move'. The Seasons addressed compliments to the Queen, and then supper began, with forty guests sitting down, presided over by the Queen Mother seated between the King and the Queen. They were waited on by the pages, while other attendants in fancy dress held up such a vast quantity of tallow torches and candles that it was as clear as daylight.

The second evening was spent in an improvised theatre, listening to a concert and watching a performance of *Princesse d'Elide* by Molière, a play consisting of dances and, again, music by Lulli. Little known nowadays, rarely played, and never according to the original version,<sup>29</sup> the *Princesse d'Elide* constitutes, in Molière's work, a curious play, where prose follows verse starting with the second act. It is a 'comédie galante', with some touches of the pastoral. The Princess affects indifference, though she loves



108 the Prince of Ithaca, Euryalus, who also loves her but who, to arouse her further interest, also feigns indifference. The story is therefore one of a 'précieuse' almost caught in her own trap. But the action is mixed with buffoonery and the Princess's jester, Moron, stands for commonsense and naturalness, for all his tomfoolery.

The interlude of the Aurore, which opens the play, speaks a praise to love. One could hardly hear it without thinking of the amours of the King.

When love offers to your eyes an agreeable choice,  
 Young beauties, let yourselves be tempted;  
 Resist from affecting the haughty pride  
 Which you were advised to adopt:  
 At the age when one is lovable,  
 Nothing is so fine as to love.

Sign freely for a faithful lover,  
 And brave those who would blame you;  
 A tender heart is lovable, and the badge of 'cruelle'  
 Is not a name of which to be proud:  
 At the age when one is beautiful,  
 Nothing is so fine as to love.

The interludes provided excuses for arias by Lulli, like the one sung by the shepherd Tireis. The music did not seek after vocal effects but served as a setting for the elegance of the verse.

Leafy trees, and you brilliant fields,  
 The beauty of which winter had robbed you,  
 Is given you back by the spring  
 You regain all your charms;  
 But my soul does not find again  
 The joy, alas, that I have lost.

The third day was spent around a vast round pond, in which were three islands: on the biggest was Alcine's beautiful palace [82]. On the other two narrower ones were stationed kettle-drummers and violins and when the spectators arrived, a concert struck up. Then Alcine and her followers, mounted on sea monsters, approached, to beg the King and Queen for protection against the attackers of the enchanted palace. But sorceresses could scarcely hope for the protection of Anne of Austria, because of 'her famous zeal in her cult for the gods'. So, resignedly, they sailed back alone to defend their island and prepare for a state of siege. Then followed six ballets with giants, dwarfs, knights and monsters. At last Mélisse (who had for the moment assumed the features of Atlas) arrived with her magic ring to break the spell. Alcine's palace went up in a glory of flares and rockets

which was only part of a firework display that had probably never been rivalled either in noise, duration or variety. That was, in fact, the end of *The Pleasures of the Enchanted Isle*, which had given its name to the whole fête, though it was by no means the end of the festivities. They went on for several more days. There were visits to the menagerie, *courses de têtes*, more plays to see and, of course, more banquets. It was not until 12th May that, for the first time, three acts of *Tartuffe* were performed, leaving the audience wondering if the ideas expressed were not rather suspect.

But what a success *The Pleasures of the Enchanted Isle* had been! It had caught all the vivacity of that new and youthful Court. No previous king could have called upon so much artistic talent. Never had France seen entertainments so ingenious and so varied. One might question whether even Renaissance Italy could rival it. There was, of course, the famous temple that Sigismondo Malatesta had built in honour of his mistress—that extraordinary evocation of the antique with exquisitely carved marble reliefs to illustrate the verses which that most erudite Italian prince had written to her. So also had Louis, in this Baroque festival, sought to celebrate his youthful zest and his love. Though the show was ephemeral and only a nine days' wonder, it was, on these grounds, perhaps not unworthy to be compared with the Tempietto at Rimini.

Although, as we have seen, there may have been some political implications, the theatrical and fabulous nature of the festival, with its innuendos or open references to current 'affaires', could hardly have been more remote from serious everyday problems—unless it was to show how dazzling this pleasure-loving and victorious young king could be. But, already at the turn of the century the historian Lavissee had written that anyone seeing how a young prince chose to amuse himself must wonder if the whole reign would follow the same pattern.

Colbert certainly must have wondered what was to be done, seeing this fantastic extravaganza taking place, not in Paris, but in an obscure and hardly heard-of hunting lodge. He, if anyone, was anxious to further Louis's ambitions and his policy of 'la gloire', but he wished it to have some relation to reality, and to have a worthy setting.

The first essential was that the King should have a residence in Paris, a palace that would be worthy of him and his ancestors, and one that could be handed on to his heirs with pride. It was, indeed, high time for something solid and permanent to be undertaken and an end put to those endless shows that had been staged by the Italians for the last twenty years, which might be vastly popular or bitterly hated by the mob, according to its mood.

There was one solution. The Louvre must, at all costs, be completed. The one question that remained was, who was to do it?

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## CHAPTER VI

9

# *Bernini visits Paris*

IN 1665 Bernini paid a visit to Paris. This is always looked upon as one of the moments when Baroque and Classicism really came face to face, and since the plans which Bernini submitted for the rebuilding of the Louvre were rejected both by Louis XIV and by Colbert it is generally taken for granted that France then decided to adopt the classical values and give a resounding rebuff to the Baroque. But it is worth while, before assuming this, to follow what did happen in some detail.

First of all, one must realize what the Louvre was like when Louis XIV and his young Queen first took up residence there in the summer of 1660. Some parts of the royal palace had been remodelled and luxuriously decorated, but as a whole it was still unfinished and, in any case, it was too cramped for the King and his court. Seen from the Seine, it looked like a small palace of three stories, the ground floor, the *piano nobile*, and the attic storey. It was bounded on one side by a wing higher than the main building (built by Lescot) and on the other, the Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois side, there was a round tower. But the centre faced due south and was unsheltered from the midday sun. Between it and the church there were the Petit-Bourbon and the Longueville mansion and a whole district through which the Rue des Poulies ran from north to south. Between the palace and the riverside a garden had been laid out which was terminated on the west by the fine building of the Little Gallery.<sup>1</sup> If one entered the Louvre by the east postern, coming from Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, one would see the façade built by Henri II, which had been copied by Lemer cier on the north, where today we find the Rue de Rivoli. The centre of the façade was broken by a clock pavilion, which Lemer cier had crowned by a quadrangular dome. On the other side there was the kitchen court, tightly hemmed in by the many mansions, gardens, and streets that had been laid out between the Louvre and the Tuileries. Here you would find the Hôpital des Quinze-Vingts, the Rue Saint-Thomas du Louvre with the mansion of Madame de Rambouillet and the Place du Carrousel.

If one followed the banks of the Seine, one would see the two palaces of the Louvre and the Tuileries already linked up by the Great Gallery. The Valois had decided that this should not be higher than the de Bois Tower, which was one of the historical landmarks<sup>2</sup> of ancient Paris, already com-



pleted under Henri IV. But much new work had been carried out at the Louvre under Louis XIII and after the Fronde. Anne of Austria had had her suite on the ground floor magnificently decorated, but when she found the heat of the summer unbearable she decided to live, for several weeks at least, in the rooms of the Little Gallery, where the windows gave on to the gardens.

For three years, from 1655 to 1658, the sculptor Michel Anguier and the artist Romanelli were engaged in decorating a suite of rooms that ran from the Hall of Mars to the balcony overlooking the quai, and their work can still be seen today. Some other, and very remarkable, decorations were carried out in the rooms which the King and Queen were to use on the first floor. Mazarin had rooms above, in the top storey, but he showed more interest in his private mansion in the Rue des Petits-Champs where his collections were housed: also his health forced him to spend much of his time out at Vincennes.

Once the royal household had settled down in the Louvre, plans were made to enlarge it. By filling in the moats and taking in some land from the Petit-Bourbon,<sup>3</sup> Le Vau, in the additions he carried out from 1661-63, extended the palace towards the east. Just as Lemercier had copied the Henri II façade when he completed the courtyard, so Le Vau built a replica of the King's pavilion and the wing by Lescot, but in the centre he placed a screen of huge pillars and surmounted the entablature with a balustrade and a low cupola flanked by two tall chimneys [83].

At the beginning of February 1661 a fire broke out in the Little Gallery, where rehearsals were being held for the ballet *l'Impatience*. The whole of the first floor was burnt out; all the royal effigies which Henri IV had collected were destroyed, and the flames reached the fine figures of slaves, carved by Biard the Elder, which were above the central doorway on the west side; yet, on the ground floor, the Queen Mother's new suite was untouched.

Le Vau, who had already begun on the façade on the north side, now undertook to repair the Little Gallery and extend it to the west so that it was possible to enter it from the Court of the Sphinx. He also changed the Gallery of the Kings by decorating it with scenes from the life of Apollo, after whom the gallery was renamed. The painter was Le Brun, and the artists chosen to execute the frames and the stucco work were Girardon, Marsi and Regnaudin.

Le Vau had planned to complete the quadrangle of the Louvre by joining up the existing buildings and making the east façade rather higher. The foundations had already been commenced before it was decided to make this the main entrance to the palace—which had to be a grand and noble design. The leading architects in France were asked to compete, and Italian architects were also asked for their advice and help in preparing the plans. The French ambassador at Rome, Créqui, and also a special envoy, the Abbé Benedetti, were told to get into touch with Bernini and Rainaldi

at the same time that, in Paris, François Mansart, Houdin, Cottart and Marot were preparing designs.

On 4th May 1664, Bernini wrote to Colbert that he was even more sensible of the honour done him, since the King had not seen his works. Also, that from the day that the ground plans had been shown him, he had put aside all other serious work to study them intensively in the hope that it might compensate for him not being '*sul sito*'.<sup>4</sup>

A few weeks later, on 23rd June 1664, he sent off a design to Colbert with a covering letter that was friendly, and also rather flamboyant; he assured him that all the talents with which Divine Providence had endowed him had been employed and, had his imagination been untrammelled by practical considerations, there would have been the plan of a palace worthy even of His Majesty.<sup>5</sup> From what one knows of Bernini, this polite and precious letter was, in fact, fishing for compliments, and an acknowledgment of the difficulties which any architect must encounter in designing a palace for a town which he had never seen.

This first plan has been identified by M. Hautecoeur, who found the elevation and the ground plan amongst other designs in a large portfolio that is still preserved in the Louvre [84].<sup>6</sup> At first sight the proposed palace is so utterly different from any building that had been previously erected, and indeed from any that one has grown used to since then, that it is easy enough to understand the shock and indeed the scandal that it caused. In the centre is a great oval pavilion which dominates the whole design, with its two loggias rising one above the other, and with a colossal order of pilasters between the arches [85]. Then, the convexity of the pavilion is flanked for contrast by two concave wings which join up two rectangular pavilions of the same height. An attic storey and a balustrade with statuary complete the building. In the central part, above the main pavilion and the great pilasters, there is a gallery with round windows in the form of a crown. The plan of the courtyard is a square surrounded by a two-storeyed gallery. At the east there are two staircases whose square turrets stand out and contrast with the galleries [86].

All the other plans which had been prepared, either in France or Italy, seem tame compared with Bernini's design. It is not that they are any less elaborate, but that they lack any mastery of movement and, indeed, the imprint of a master-architect. If one compares another Italian design with Bernini's—that submitted by Rainaldi, for example—there is a rather low rustication of the ground floor, a colossal order for the *piano nobile*, an attic storey; the central motif is surmounted by a huge royal crown which supports a gigantic fleur-de-lys. Bernini did not allow superfluous ornaments, but relied upon the contrast between the central pavilion and the concave lines of the galleries to give a feeling of movement to the façade. The square towers, with their solidity and almost austere character, suitably ended the rhythmic pattern. One may admire or dislike the design, but if one takes the trouble to discuss the pros and cons of this plan at least there

will be some understanding of what Bernini intended. Certainly Colbert did that. The loggias gave no direct access to the living-rooms and the palace was surrounded, except where there were the corner towers, by an arcade. It was doubtless, as Colbert admitted, 'a superb and magnificent' piece of decoration. It was quite possible, both on the ground floor or from the first storey, to walk along the galleries and watch the coming and going of the nobles with their train of carriages and their retinues in the courtyard which was to have led up to the palace. But the Minister saw some practical objections to this, and wrote a long and very detailed memorandum about the project. It is worth studying this report carefully, and to see, paragraph by paragraph, what criticisms Colbert made about the individual parts of Bernini's plan.<sup>7</sup>

It is easy enough to see what had gone wrong. The plan looked enchanting but it took no notice whatever of 'sordid' necessities, and practical needs were sacrificed to the superb decoration. The lack of depth of the gallery was one thing that Colbert criticized, since it had 'que 2 toises 1/2 en son dedans' (i.e. 15 feet). The oval pavilion had a great state apartment on every storey, but the one on the ground floor had also to serve as the only entrance to the palace, and had therefore been the most ornate and the most beautiful 'to prepare the visitors for the magnificence of the interior'. It was felt that, apart from the richness of decoration the entrance must be lofty, certainly higher than the other state rooms above. It might have to be built up to the roof and be lit by a dome, or, at the very least, carried up two storeys so that it would be flooded by daylight from the windows of the second as well as from those of the ground floor. There would be no oval hall on the first storey, and the *piano nobile* would have even less space for rooms. It was evident that on the first floor all the lighting for the rooms and ante-chambers could only come from the outside gallery or from the two small courtyards that lay hidden behind the concave galleries.<sup>8</sup> Even then it seemed as if the ends of the building might be in semi-darkness, for one window, facing west, looked out upon the winding staircases and the other, facing east, gave on to the small courtyard behind the concave gallery. The main objection was the crown which surmounted the oval pavilion. Everyone naturally expected it to be the royal crown—and therefore a design of a closed crown would have to be substituted for the open crown that Bernini had suggested. And that again opened up difficulties about how the covering of the crown should be carried out.

Colbert at last decided that Bernini had really been interested only in the façade of this magnificent palace, and sent him his criticisms 'so that he might review his plan and remodel it as he thought fit'. That therefore is what happened to the first of Bernini's plans for the Louvre. On the whole Colbert had been pleased with it, even with many of its details, except for the crown, and expected that Bernini's ingenuity would be able to solve all practical difficulties. Nor indeed was Bernini at all taken aback. It is certain that he prepared a second plan when he was working in Rome in



the winter months of 1664-65, but the only tangible evidence is the sketches now preserved in the Stockholm museum, and doubts have been cast on these.<sup>9</sup> If indeed they are a true copy of Bernini's plan, they show great changes from the previous plan. Now, following Colbert's advice, the plan for an oval crown was abandoned, and possibly because of this and the criticisms of inadequate lighting, the whole idea of an oval pavilion was scrapped, and in its stead Bernini proposed to make the eastern side a large palace, concave, where the central pavilion with its decoration of colossal order would be advanced several metres. The rectangular towers at both ends of the façade show little alteration from the first design. It would appear that the central pavilion was taken up by a gallery, but the corridors had been dispensed with and the adjoining rooms admitted the daylight directly. Another thing which had not been envisaged in the first design was the ground floor which now formed the base of the building, and if one compares the two plans, which have the same number of storeys (the attic storey of the first is replaced by the ground floor in the second design), it seems that the later design did provide more rooms, and more comfortable ones.

But the interest aroused by this second design did not last long, for, almost as soon as it arrived in Paris, news came that Bernini himself would soon visit the capital. After the reconciliation between Louis XIV and Alexander VII, the Pope, whether out of the goodness of his heart or out of fright, was persuaded to give several months' leave to Bernini, so that he might travel to Paris and make plans for the Louvre on the spot. Father Oliva, who was Vicar-General of the Jesuits and a personal friend of Bernini, was charged with smoothing away any difficulties that might arise. He had persuaded Bernini that it was his duty to accept the King's invitation and went so far as to say that even if an angel from Heaven appeared saying that *il Cavaliere* would die on the journey, he should still go. Even so this second plan is important, were it only a proof of how great an effort Bernini was willing to make to modify his ideals of grand decoration for practical necessities. It is a proof, too, of the richness and the subtlety of his creative genius and is, one might almost say, a halfway house between the fine flower of his first enthusiastic reaction and what he later on suggested when he was actually in Paris. Both designs were Baroque: the first more exuberantly so, and probably because of its exuberance the more charming of the two. Roberto Pane has pointed out that the two Baroque wings show an affinity to the work of Pietro da Cortona or Borromini and a break away from the Renaissance tradition which Bernini usually followed.<sup>10</sup> It would seem that his first impulse upon receiving an invitation from the greatest sovereign of the age, was to send back something quite exceptional—something which without denying his own individuality would be a quintessence of his grandest manner. He would offer to the French king a creation in the Roman style which he had not even been able to achieve in Rome.

But before going on with the story we might stop and ask whether the whole of Bernini's visit to Paris and in particular his plans for rebuilding the Louvre were not really attempts to square the circle. The French were quite definite on two things: the main entrance to the Louvre should be from the Saint-Germain side and this façade must be the most imposing and beautiful. It then naturally followed that the royal suite must be there as well. There was both an aesthetic and a practical problem to be solved. Bernini, with the superb decorations of his first plan had tackled the former, but the question of accommodation remained. The fact that the grand façade faced east was a constantly adverse factor, for the wing facing the Seine was incomparably better lit and more healthy, and the royal apartments had been established there already since 1665. The east wing, running straight into the city, would also raise many problems of security if the King were to move his quarters.<sup>11</sup> One would have thought this would have been recognized and dealt with, and it would surely have been possible to make the principal façade as beautiful and ornamental as possible, yet still leave the royal quarters where they were, airy and sunny, with a view across the garden to the busy river, and above all, with better guarantees of security. As we shall see the question of the royal apartments played a decisive part in the discussions which raged over the plans that Bernini brought with him to Paris, and it had not even been solved when Perrault's design for a colonnade was accepted [94]. Then having wasted so much time and so many opportunities, everyone reluctantly admitted what should have been evident from the start. The royal quarters remained in the central wing.<sup>12</sup> Le Vau had, in order to make them more comfortable, to double their size, and planned a new façade which this time would be suitable for the *façade d'honneur*.<sup>13</sup>

So it was that Louis XIV, who had left to live at the Tuileries while the Louvre was being finished, came back to find it still uncompleted. He then decided definitely to remove himself and his Court to Versailles.

It was only in 1789 that the Paris mob forced their king to take up his residence in the city again and live in the Tuileries, the last stage before the Temple and the scaffold. Napoleon the Great, the restored Bourbons, and the second Emperor all lived at the Tuileries in the days of their glory or decline, but no French sovereign nor any President ever took up residence in that east wing of the Louvre which had caused such a controversy over styles and which boasted so lovely a colonnade.

It was at the end of April 1665 that Bernini set out from Rome, taking with him his pupils Matteo de Rossi and Julio, and his son Paulo who was then eighteen. The journey over the Alps, by river and by road, took up the whole of May when the weather was already getting hot. Orders had been given by Louis XIV that at each halting stage every possible comfort should be provided and that the traveller should be welcomed with honours even greater than those normally given to princes. Indeed

116 the King had the whim of treating 'the King of Art' almost as an equal.

On 2nd June, several leagues from the capital, Bernini's carriage was met by one bearing an envoy of the King who was commissioned to welcome him. This was Paul Fréart de Chantelou, head of the King's Household, who was practically seconded to Bernini throughout his stay, visiting him every day, and trying to smooth away the smallest difficulties. Chantelou has left a record—the *Journal du séjour du Bernin en France*, dedicated to his elder brother Jean—which is of first class importance. It has been the source of the most malevolent stories about Bernini's vanity, his moodiness, and sudden outbursts of temper, but if the book is read as a whole Bernini comes out of it very well and it is a distortion just to pick out certain passages.<sup>14</sup>

Bernini was a little over sixty-seven when he set off for France, which then was looked on as a very considerable age, but he was to live on for another fifteen years and never experience decline, and on this visit to Paris he was both physically and mentally in his prime. He walked round the city with an energy that would have done credit to a man twenty or even thirty years younger. The diary kept by Chantelou also makes it clear that during the five months he spent in Paris, Bernini achieved quite an astonishing amount of work, for on top of the actual creative work he produced, he had to cope with innumerable difficulties: difficulties of language, of getting on with the great court personages, the innumerable visits and receptions, the never-ending discussions of trivial and irritating detail, which he was not accustomed to, and finally the shame of finding that, perhaps on the same day that he had been praised to the skies, he had also been the object of boundless chicanery. A portrait of him was painted by Baciccio very shortly before, and an engraving of it made by Van Westerhout is the frontispiece of the *Life of Bernini* by Baldinucci.<sup>15</sup> The impression of vitality and integrity is striking. The majestic head framed by long white hair, now receding a little, the burning and intelligent dark eyes beneath the thick white eyebrows, the almost vibrant lips, all seem to convey that ardent temperament that Chantelou mentions, and which inspires both affection and respect. This ageing Italian could be quite enchanting still, even though his foreign manners aroused stupid sniggers among the courtiers, which he caught so aptly in one of his caricatures.<sup>16</sup>

When he arrived in Paris he was lodged in a mansion adjacent to the Louvre, and two days later, on the feast of Corpus Christi, he was taken to Saint-Germain to be presented to the King. He and Louis XIV tried to out-rival each other in compliments, and Bernini called upon gestures to back up his eloquence. The words he actually uttered we know from Chantelou, but one must not forget that when Bernini talked his sensitive hands, the whole of his body, and every expression of his face counted as much as his tongue.

'I have seen, Sire,' he said 'palaces of Emperors and Popes, and on my



journey hither those of reigning sovereigns which are to be seen on the road from Rome to Paris, but for a King of France, we must construct something more magnificent.' And turning to the courtiers he added a phrase that became famous, 'Let no one talk to me of petty things.' On that occasion too Louis XIV declared that 'it would please him if the buildings of his ancestors could be preserved, but if it were necessary to pull them down to make a grand building, he would let them go. And money was no object'.<sup>17</sup>

Bernini set to work at once. He thought that it would be best to level everything and make a new start, but from several sides he was advised to be more accommodating.<sup>18</sup> Colbert wrote to him, 'Though expense should not be considered when beauty or comfort is essentially involved, nevertheless when a large outlay would add little to beauty or comfort one expects this to be taken into consideration by a great architect'.<sup>19</sup>

On 19th June, Bernini submitted his plans to Colbert, and the next day showed them to Louis XIV. His first thoughts were to raise the palace on a foundation of rocks, but he thought this would be too daring an innovation for the French and made an overlay which showed the lower storey carried out in the more conventional rustication. The first moment, however, that Louis XIV saw the plan, he declared that the rock foundation was preferable to rustication. Bernini showed his surprise and delight at this, loudly proclaiming that His Majesty had so fine and delicate a taste that few professional architects could rival him.<sup>20</sup> After this royal audience, Bernini went to pray with such zealous thanksgiving that he prostrated himself again and again. That day the King ordered Bernini to make a bust of him.

But Colbert still had his doubts. He feared that, if the royal apartments were to be in the pavilion near Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, the noise from the harbourage of l'Ecole would be a nuisance. Then the lodges and the columns of the vestibule would provide ideal hide-outs for possible assassins.<sup>21</sup> Nor did Colbert have any illusions about the way courtiers behaved. Whether from the first or top storey, nothing would ever stop them from emptying their chamber pots out of their windows into the moat, and if the base of the Louvre was compiled of rocks, this filth might be scattered on them with noisome results.

At the beginning of July Bernini had designed the façade of the kitchen court, which Colbert criticized as being so tall that it would detract from the grandeur of the Great Gallery which adjoined it. Bernini retorted that it was only what he was planning to do in the Piazza of St Peter's, which would, by keeping the colonnade slightly lower than the façade of the basilica, enhance its height.<sup>22</sup> He then went on to expound one of his pet themes: that architecture should reflect the proportions of the human body. The central piece should be like a head dominating a body. Later on Colbert began to wonder if Bernini's plans would not involve the pulling down of everything between the Louvre and the church of Saint-Germain-

*l'Auxerrois*. Bernini reassured him. Gesticulating, taking a piece of chalk and roughing out his plans on a pavement, Bernini showed that all he wanted was a square in front of the Louvre and a road leading up to the main entrance. The church was to remain untouched and would, indeed, take up one side of the street. But a fortnight later Colbert again joined battle. He said that everything on both sides of the Rue des Poulies would have to be pulled down, and the expense would be so enormous that the whole plan would be set back several years. Colbert also pointed out that it would take several years to get rid of the tenants and that 'you can't just throw people out overnight. He had no idea of what they did in Rome, but it was not usual in France'.<sup>23</sup>

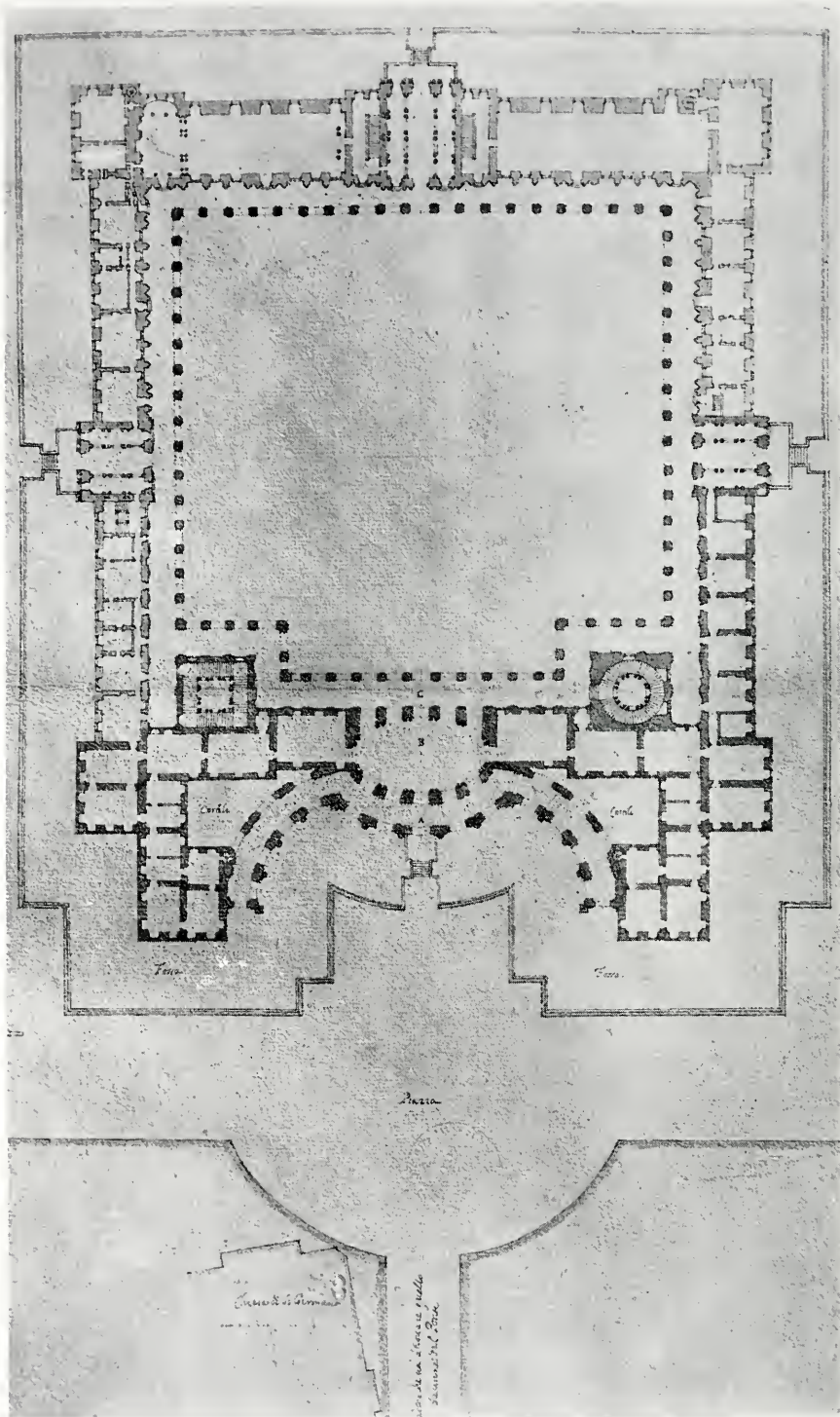
From this moment on Bernini was convinced that Louis XIV would be displeased to see that the buildings that his ancestors had erected were to be pulled down, so he set to work on a plan which left nearly the whole of the existing work still standing but would still be 'a palace that would be beautiful for its richness and grandeur and inspiration. I who am lowly should have little opinion of my work but that I appreciate that it is due to the gifts with which God has endowed me',<sup>24</sup> he wrote to the Duke of Modena. But at least he was determined not to have the great courtyard in the form of a square such as Le Vau had planned and for which foundations had been commenced on the east side. He wished to make the courtyard more long than broad and this was another thing to worry Colbert, who could not see how it would be possible to keep the wings already built since the main pieces and the domes would no longer be the central piece.<sup>25</sup> Though Colbert raised objections at every turn, he never stopped asking Bernini for his ideas for other buildings; a stone bridge from the southern pavilion to the left bank (now the Passerelle des Arts); a large square on the other side of the bridge that might be suitable for public shows, and at its centre should have a monument to the glorification of Louis XIV, and also large buildings to house the gendarmes, musketeers, and royal guards. He raised the questions of laying out the space between the Louvre and the Tuileries; of the right place to erect an obelisk or a column, and of a grand chapel behind the Abbey of Saint-Denis which would be suitable for monuments to the Bourbon kings. He was too much of an economist to imagine that all these plans could be carried out straight away; he was talking in terms of twenty or thirty years. It meant that Colbert was taking advantage of the presence in Paris of the greatest contemporary architect to draw up plans for an entirely new city full of marvels that would completely supersede the old city, still medieval and rustic, which Bernini saw. But if the schemes for the Louvre had appeared so disappointing to Colbert one wonders why he should have asked Bernini for so many other plans. Still, even the talk of them aroused lively and justified apprehension amongst the French architects. Whoever had been in Le Vau's shoes would have had to cope with the same chaos: not only were his own plans for the Louvre to be discarded, but even what had been

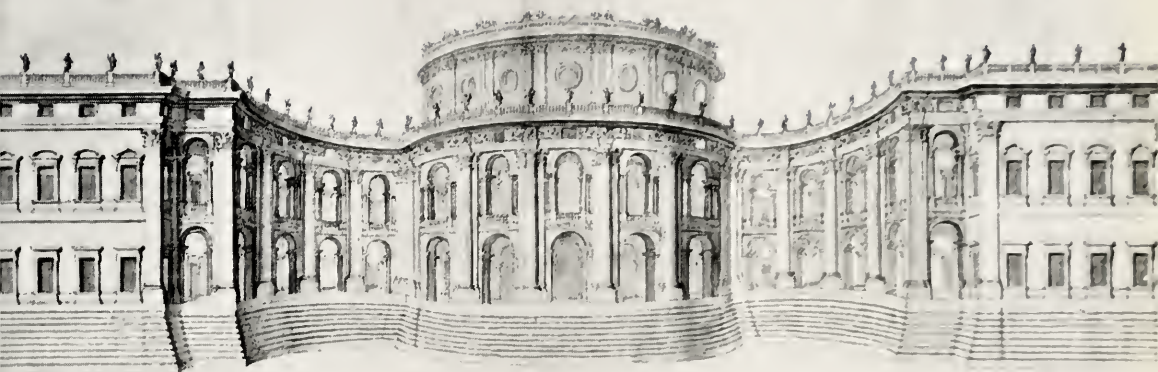


Vue de l'entrée du Châtea. L'entrée au nord de la Cour, finit par la cour du Vau

Le Vau's elevation for the Louvre extended the royal residence to the east. He built a replica of the King's pavilion and Lescot's wing, and placed a colossal forepart in the centre





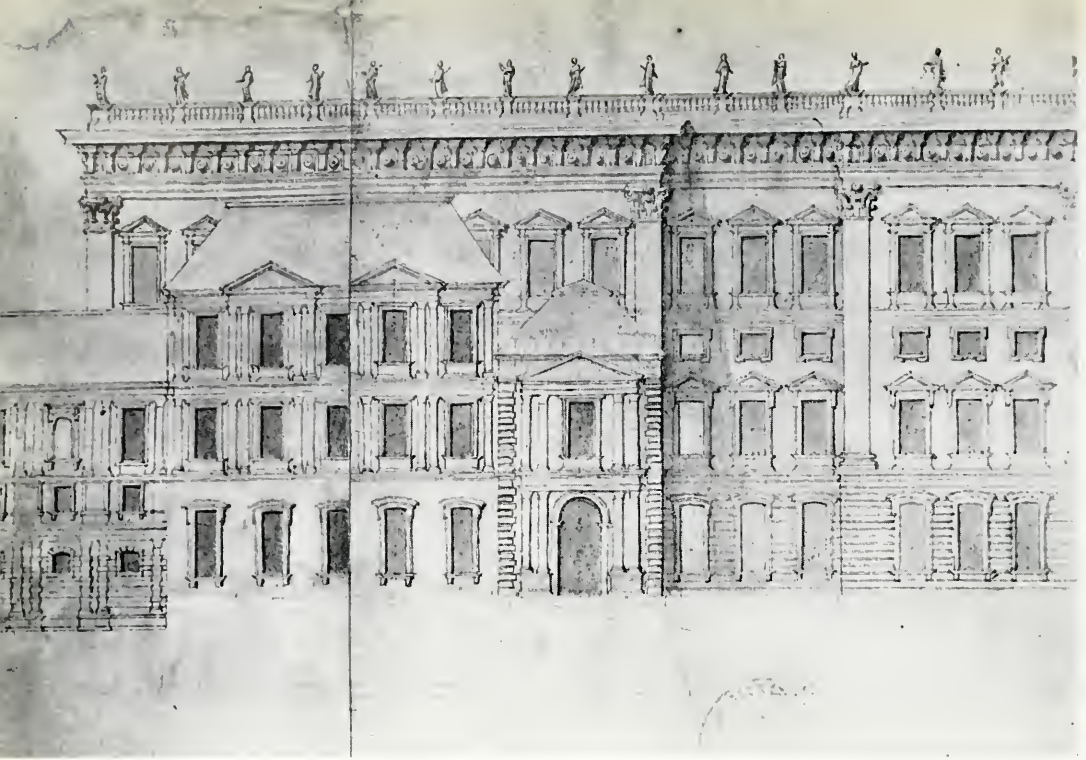


- 85 Bernini's elevation for the First Project for the Louvre. On the east front, at either end, are two staircases in square towers



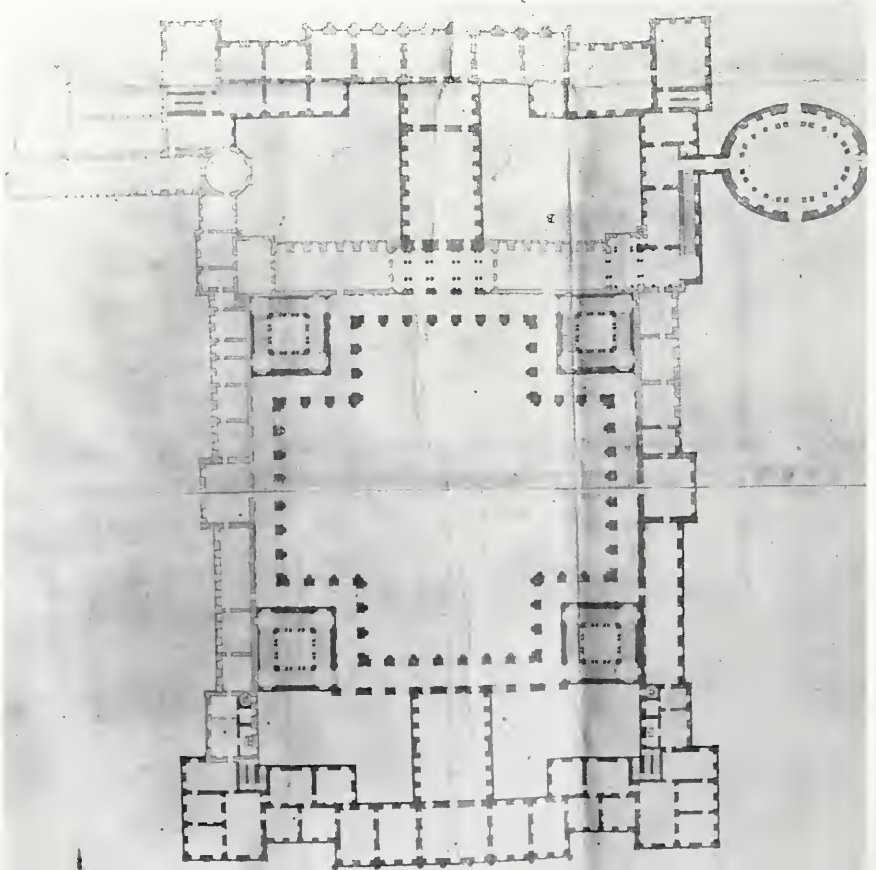
- 86 Bernini's elevation for the Final Project for the Louvre. The east front forms the main entrance. In the centre of the projecting ground floor are three great arched doors, the tallest flanked by two statues of Hercules. The design is crowned with an imposing cornice surmounted by a balustrade and a row of statues





- 87 Bernini's elevation for the Final Project for the Louvre. The south front, as engraved by Marot, shows the grandiose proportions and the skill with which Bernini resolved the problems of linking the various elements  
Bernini's Final Project for the Louvre, showing, on the north side, the great oval chapel he had attached to the palace

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By the end of July 1665 the model for Bernini's bust of Louis XIV was ready. The courtiers gathered round to admire it. 'Don't do anything more to it,' said one, 'it is so good I am afraid you might spoil it'



Until his death in 1683, Colbert, portrayed here by Lefebvre, was an indefatigable servant of the King and contributed much towards the better management of the State. He appreciated Bernini's work but at the same time did not regard him as sufficiently amenable, and took fright at the enormous expense his projects entailed

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Bernini wanted the composition of his equestrian statue of Louis XIV to lead the eye upwards: the horse rears, paws the air, strains to jump an obstacle. After Girardon's re-modelling the statue became a representation of Marcus Curtius plunging into the fiery abyss

91

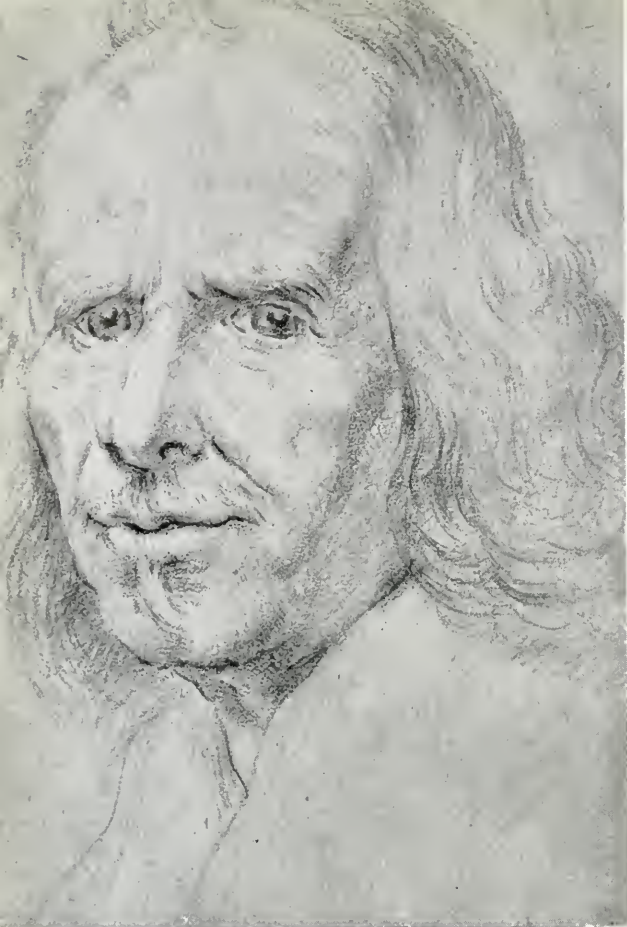






Bernini put six columns on an oval plan round the high altar, and topped each column with a giltwood angel by Michel-Anguier in his baldacchino for the Chapel of the Val de Grâce





Bernini, an incomparable portraitist, has left several self-portraits which have made us familiar with his regular features and the burning intensity of his expression

93

Perrault's colonnade for the Louvre has become an essential part of Paris and a model of classical grandeur

94



built was to be demolished. The south wing and, should there be a large square, the Pavilion of the Four Nations would also have to go. There were also cabals—and surely this was not only peculiar to the seventeenth century—between men of the same profession. During August the French architects thought up and elaborated new plans for the Louvre which they hoped to put forward against Bernini's. It was perhaps a little naïve on his part to say, at the beginning of September, that his French colleagues should not wish him any ill for if, for instance, the Pope wished for a French building, His Holiness would undoubtedly summon a French architect to Rome.

Bernini, though every hour seemed to be taken up in his work, somehow managed to visit the capital; he was not often pleased with what he saw. To imagine that he criticized Parisian buildings for their simplicity, symmetry or classical qualities is to get an entirely wrong impression of his taste. What shocked him were certain irregular features, illogicalities, traces of Gothicism, or of the Fontainebleau Renaissance style. In his opinion the most successful monument in Paris was the Church of the Novitiate, which had been inspired by Giacomo della Porta; on the other hand he approved of Chantelou's criticism of the Baroque but Flemish style of the Jesuit college chapel. The Tuileries, which Le Vau was trying to lay out for the royal family to inhabit while the Louvre was being remodelled, appeared to him as a pretentious trifle. The Italian dome of the Val-de-Grâce was described as too small a skull cap for so large a head. The tombs of Saint-Denis left him cold. But what really took Bernini aback were the huge roofs and tall chimneys which he saw on every side. Since he was in Paris in summer—that year it was a very warm summer—he never understood that the sloping roof had been evolved because of the climate nor that the decorated chimney had been designed to obviate the appearance of necessary but hideous pipes spouting haphazardly from a building. His explanation was that the French had become used to higher and higher roofs, like a man who accustoms himself to drinking colder and colder water until he makes himself ill by swallowing ice. Thus, looking at the roofing, according to him, one only found 'horrid deformity'. There was nothing very wrong in this, nor was it surprising that a foreigner should be struck by it, but it was only too easy to exaggerate and criticize what Bernini said and make him out as a conceited ass who ran down everything he came across. 'If only,' groaned Colbert, 'he would spare others a little.' Louis XIV, more cautious, merely remarked, 'He doesn't praise many things.'

The commission of a bust meant that he often had to meet the King [89]. Instead of asking his model to keep still Bernini begged him, on the contrary, to move about just as he wished. He himself followed him about, sketching down characteristic attitudes and, in order to see the King from all angles, bending down and twisting himself into every imaginable contortion, gesticulating as only an Italian could. It made the courtiers laugh



at him, but he himself was so carried away by his work that he seemed quite oblivious of their mockery.

Louis XIV could speak a little Italian himself and we have one record of him joking with Bernini. It was when the artist was making a sketch at the derobing. 'I am now about to steal' ('Sto rubando'), he said. The King in his most gracious manner replied 'Ah, but only to give back' ('Sì, ma e per restituere'). 'Perhaps I shall not give back as much as I've taken' ('Pero per restituers meno del rubato'), said Bernini. Their relationship could not have been more amiable.

At the end of July the model of the bust was ready and the courtiers flocked to admire it. 'Don't touch it,' Madame de Lionne said, 'it is so good I'm terrified you might spoil it.' But Bernini, who was always seeking perfection, went on working at it for two more months.

Then Monsieur, the King's brother, asked him to design a fountain for his palace at Saint-Cloud, and Bernini, who adored work of this sort, thought of creating something that would combine naturalism and grandeur, since he thought the French way of dealing with ornamental waters was as petty and fiddling as little bits of fancy work done by nuns.<sup>26</sup>

In August, chiefly to get away from importunate visitors, Bernini moved into Mazarin's mansion. At the end of the month he was asked if he would attend a weekly meeting where all details of construction, etc, might be discussed. They were to be held each Sunday and attended by Colbert, Chantelou and his brother Fréart de Chambray, Perrault, Madrot (inspector of works), Maizières (contractor for the Louvre), la Motte (inspector of the royal buildings) Bergeron (master mason) and du Metz (keeper of the King's furniture). The whole idea of these meetings was odious to Bernini, and he said that in Rome no one would have thought of asking him to descend to such petty detail, and 'that he had high ranking clerics to look after practical problems which were necessary for carrying out his ideas'.<sup>27</sup> He was most annoyed when the committee detained him to argue about exactly where the cisterns or the lavatories should be placed, suggesting the latter should be at the top of the staircases. They argued that since the smell would rise the lavatories would cause inconvenience if placed lower down. Yet when he got back to his rooms, he carefully noted down all the objections which had been brought up. Most of September went by in this way, but by the 20th the designs were so far advanced that they could be engraved and Bernini asked whom he should send them to. He was advised to employ Jean Marot, who in a few days turned out plates which are distinguished by their artistic skill and precision. They are included in his *Recueil de l'Architecture française* [87].

This plan for the Louvre was henceforth looked on as definitive. The engraver Jean Varin struck a medal showing the main façade of the new palace.<sup>28</sup> On 17th October, in the presence of the King, the foundation stone was solemnly laid. Work was then commenced on foundations near



to those which had already been prepared by Le Vau on the eastern side. But Bernini's ideas were on a huge scale and, had they been carried out, the eastern wing of the palace would have been much nearer to Saint-Germain than the present day colonnade. All the space now taken up by the lawns that replace the old moat, the railings, and the pavement would have come within the precincts of the new palace. There would have been a space between the palace and the church, but people were beginning to wonder whether it would be great enough to allow the spectator to get far enough away to see the palace in its true perspective or be an adequate approach.

To get an idea of what this superb palace would have been like, we must turn first to the plates engraved by Marot, though the medal by Varin adds a little to our knowledge. Other sources which have recently come to light and are almost as valuable are designs preserved in the Stockholm museum, which have been annotated by Mr Josephson, and those discovered by M. Hautecoeur in the portfolios of the Louvre. From these one can reconstruct Bernini's plans. They were so advanced that work could be commenced and he himself could leave France, thinking his task had been successfully completed. At the same time one can see several things that eventually led to the final collapse of this magnificent project.

The five prints in Marot's *Recueil* show the ground-plan of the palace, the east façade which was to be the main entrance, part of the great courtyard, the lateral façade, and the façade facing the Tuileries. The whole impression is of a building which in its size alone was something quite novel. The ground-plan shows us that the palace was to be surrounded by moats on every side, that on the eastern side being the broadest, in keeping with the main entrance and the most elaborate of the façades. The wing had a depth of two rooms, but the rooms at the back did not face on to the great courtyard: they looked out on two small courtyards which were divided by a huge colonnaded peristyle which connected the bridge over the moat directly with the great courtyard. This itself was square, but at each corner Bernini had placed little pavilions to house the staircases, and this gave the courtyard the appearance of a Greek cross. All four sides were decorated by two storeys of loggias, which ran quite close to the north, south and west wings, while on the east they formed a decorative arcade between the two small courtyards and the great courtyard. Beyond the west wing this design is repeated and we find two lateral courtyards divided by a peristyle before we come to the outer west wing facing toward the Tuileries. When one begins to study the elevations one sees that the main façade rises sheer from the rock-like foundation and consists of a large central pavilion, flanked by two more pavilions set back, and terminating with two corner pavilions advanced to the alignment of the central one. There are three storeys. The ground floor is rusticated and, in the centre, pierced by three large arched portals. The tallest of them is flanked by two statues of Hercules.<sup>29</sup> Then come two more storeys. The

whole is crowned by a bold cornice, with a balustrade and a row of statues. The central pavilion is of colossal order: gigantic Corinthian columns spring up from the foundations to the entablature and afford a strong relief to the whole building. To emphasize the effect, the two pavilions which stand back are only decorated by the pediments of the windows, and the terminal pavilions have only simple pilasters. It gives an impression of grandeur—logical, regular and serene, and perhaps slightly cold, since the stretches of plain wall play an important part in the design. If through laziness one has ever been inclined to think of the Baroque as a matter of contorted and curved lines, here is the most emphatic denial. But, both in conception and in detail, this new Louvre had nothing in common with French architecture: it is without a shadow of a doubt an Italian, one might even say a Roman palace. The extraordinary rock-like base surmounted by rustication, the absence of any visible roof, the line of statues, the relatively small windows, the great stretches of wall which (though in Paris, and facing east!) seem to call for brilliant sunshine, all are a complete break with French tradition.<sup>30</sup> In the courtyard the equally Italianate galleries serve no useful purpose, though they constitute a most decorative veneer. This arcading is echoed in the wing facing the Tuileries, though it is not a copy and the effect is less solemn [87].

Personally I think it a grave mistake to imagine that the whole of Bernini's plans were expected to be carried out at one go. We have too few documents to be certain. It could well be that the plates engraved by Marot merely show the ideal, the picture of what might, given the will and the means, be made of the Louvre. In October 1665, the government accepted the plans, though it had not decided to go ahead with them entirely as they were.

One surprising thing when looking at Marot's prints is that, although Bernini had been protesting, ever since July, that he was going to conserve much of the older building, we seem to be looking at an entirely new palace. Large areas of the palace are new, but a careful examination does show that parts of the old Louvre are still there; for example behind the galleries of the courtyard there still remain the buildings erected by Lescot and Lemercier. Then one can trace some of Le Vau's work in the lateral façade, much heightened and transformed, and no longer with its columns, dome or chimneys. But what was the attic of the earlier work can now only be seen in that curious suite of small windows between the first and second storeys.

The plan in the Louvre collection gives us more to go on [88]. It is carried out in two different inks. The lighter, a blue ink, has been used to indicate the parts of the older building which were to be preserved. It shows us what had been the work of Lescot, Lemercier and Le Vau. There is one feature in this plan, however, of which there is not the slightest trace in Marot's engravings. It is a large oval building near the present Rue de Rivoli and running up to the place where the *Magasins du Louvre* now

stand. It is attached to the new buildings by what looks like a stem, giving access to the second façade on the Tuileries side. At first sight one might wonder if this were an earlier project which Bernini scrapped before sending off his final plans to Marot, or if it were a later addition. Luckily we know for certain that it was an addition. This oval building was to have been a chapel and Chantelou has given us the story of its stormy origin.

The day after the foundation stone had been solemnly laid on 17th October, Colbert went to see Bernini. He said that the position which had been decided on for the chapel in the north of the Louvre did not please him at all, since the King and court would find it difficult to reach it, and that something else must be found. The question of the chapel had already been discussed many times. It was supposed to serve the dual function of a private royal chapel and a parish church. Bernini had already been asked to change its site over and over again. This time he lost his temper. He replied to Colbert with considerable spirit that 'no one can do a thing and not do it; it was something to have managed to solve the problem of placing the grand staircases where they would not interrupt the great sweep of the noble plan of the Louvre by siting them at the four corners of the courtyard. But to build a chapel as big as a church in a place accessible to the public but still private to the King, who should be able to get there without going through the quarter where it was built was quite impossible, at least he didn't know how and he had done what he did know.'<sup>31</sup>

When Colbert had gone away, very discontented, and Bernini was left alone with Chantelou, he burst out much more violently. He shouted that Colbert 'treated him like a child . . . that he tried to make himself out to be a know-all and knew nothing . . . that he was a proper c——!' A shocking phrase to use, no doubt, but surely not a very rare or serious crime to use a vivid word about a great personage who had come to cavil at plans which everyone had thought finally settled.

However, this tirade led to nothing serious. Bernini was soothed by Chantelou. Though still grumbling, he went back to work once more through the night. The next day he was able to greet Colbert with a smile and inform him that he had found the solution of the problem and the site for a church that could hold a congregation as big as any accommodated in the Pantheon.<sup>32</sup> Since it was to be a perfect oval, it could not be more elegant. It would be more superb than anything yet seen, for the main pillars would be encased in the most beautiful red and white marble that France could produce. The capitals would be of Carrara marble which would be sent, already carved, from Italy. The pillars of the gallery would be bronze with gilded capitals. And this chapel, placed on the Saint-Honoré side, could be reached by the King from his own suite. It could also be approached from the galleries. Colbert said these arrangements were absolutely to his taste, and one may surmise that Bernini gave him some sketches and that the minister, either that day or the next, passed on



the one which we now see in the Louvre with the chapel drawn to scale with the main design.

Bernini left Paris on 20th October. He went on completing or altering his plans until the very last moment and the 'final' design that had been engraved by Marot did not mean that it might not have been modified.

His departure was marked by every possible show of esteem. Already, when on 5th October he had presented the finished bust to the King, Louis XIV had showered praises on him.<sup>33</sup> He replied that he also had thought it had been a great success; at any rate he had worked on it with such enthusiasm that he believed it to be the least bad portrait that had left his hands, that he was sorry that he must return and would have been happy to spend the rest of his life in the King's service 'not because he was King of France, and a great sovereign, but because he had learnt that His Majesty's spirit was even more exalted than his rank'. But here Bernini could not go on and began to weep.<sup>34</sup>

During their last interview, Colbert said, 'Monsieur, it is to be hoped that you have enough love for your work to let us hope that, in a year or two, you will wish to come to see the Louvre.' He repeated that Paulo Bernini, whose talents as a sculptor they so much appreciated, must come back to Paris, and they would make a Frenchman of him. The King sent Bernini a present of 10,000 golden écus. He promised him, in addition, a pension of 6,000 livres, and one of 1,200 livres for his son. Also Bernini's staff were rewarded: Mathias de Rossi and Julio, Barbaret, who had acted as interpreter with the thankless task of translating into Italian all the criticisms made against Bernini's work, and also Signor Mancini who was his travelling companion.<sup>35</sup> Mathias de Rossi said he would return next winter, when he had finished the models for the sculptures and cleared up all the details about accommodation in the palace. Unless one is determined to think that all these things were a polite court comedy, that the laying of the foundation stone itself was a farce, it is difficult to believe that, as Bernini left for Rome, all his plans had been soundly and thoroughly damned.

There are many reasons why this seems improbable, and foremost amongst them were Colbert's intentions. Bernini and he had been at loggerheads over and over again. The minister, with an eye on everything, proved to be a tyrant, but he had never lost his respect for the genius of the architect.<sup>36</sup> The building of the Louvre appeared to him to be a matter of national importance above all—one might almost say that it was an integral part of his conception of the monarchy. The King should exert himself to the utmost to have the most beautiful palace in the world, where he might live amongst his people. It should be a tangible sign of his glory. The work on the Tuileries was only to make somewhere habitable while the Louvre was being built. Saint-Germain was only a summer

residence. And as for Versailles . . . ! Colbert's remarks about this are often quoted to denigrate Louis XIV.

'Your Majesty knows that in default of resounding victories on the field, nothing can add a greater glory to a prince than buildings and that all posterity will judge them by one of those great mansions which they have constructed during their lifetime. What a pity it is that the greatest and most virtuous of kings, of a virtue that makes the greatest princes, is confined to that one at Versailles! And yet, nevertheless, one has grounds for fearing such a misfortune.'<sup>37</sup> But not enough notice has been given to the fact that this was sent, in writing, to the King on 22nd September 1665, that is at the same time that Marot was just completing his engravings of Bernini's 'definitive' plans. Louis XIV had then by no means given up the idea of the Louvre, but without any thought of money he was running up vast expenses for something which, as far as Colbert could see, might add possibly to his pleasure, but nothing to his renown. While Louis XIV was behaving as though the Treasury funds were inexhaustible, Colbert, who knew they were not, had made his decision—everything should be subordinated to the completion of the Louvre. He had faith enough in French architects, but he held, as did the whole of contemporary Europe, that Bernini was the true successor of Michelangelo. It had become a tenet of his political faith that the artist who had been asked by the Popes to complete the most beautiful church in Christendom, was the only one to build the most beautiful palace in the world in Paris to the greater glory of the King of France.<sup>38</sup> If one cannot understand this attitude, this longing for grandeur and prestige, one cannot really understand Colbert. Bernini himself perhaps never realized this aspect of Colbert, or perhaps it was in bad temper that he could only recall 'whole committees pettifogging about privies or pipes'. He had lost sight of the minister who so wished for something perfect, but something which must be perfect in every detail.

There was also another reason why Colbert was on Bernini's side. He wished to found an academy in Rome where young French artists could carry out their studies, not independently (as Poussin or Lorrain had done), but as well disciplined and well looked-after pupils. He thought that the Head of the Academy should be Errard, but hoped that Bernini might be some sort of Inspector-General. The pension that had been given by Louis could then be looked on, not just as an honorary gift, but as a wage for continued services.

We can say, at the least, that when Bernini left Paris his plan for the Louvre had not been rejected. By this time the French architects were fully aware of the challenge they faced, and had also had time to find out the weaknesses in Bernini's plan.<sup>39</sup> Perrault in particular was in a very strong position to criticize, since he had had to interview Bernini—and the interviews were often stormy—about the modifications demanded by Colbert, and had also been in touch with Mathias de Rossi about specifications.

The French had always disliked the plan for its theatricality and they

looked on Bernini as a stage designer rather than an architect. Their criticism was inspired by a fundamentally different outlook and conception of architecture. They found fault with the proportions of the Corinthian order, the smallness of the windows, and the central feature. They found the eastern façade rather bare and were quick to notice that the lateral façade was a compromise which lacked regularity and autonomy.

One person in whom Colbert had great confidence was Le Brun. It was unfortunate that when Bernini met him in Paris he detested him almost as much as he had previously detested Borromini in Rome. So once Bernini had left, it is easy enough to imagine Colbert listening to his friends and cronies saying everything bad they could about the work and the man both as an artist and as a person. Colbert himself probably remembered how much he had disliked his manner of 'never sparing another' and his 'rather hot temperament'. None the less he pressed Mathias de Rossi to come to Paris to carry out scale models in wood and stucco and see about the interior decorations. Rossi arrived back in Paris in May 1666, and began work, but Colbert seemed in no great haste to visit him and very soon the Italian heard rumours that Bernini's plan would never be carried out.<sup>40</sup> Yet even on 31st December 1666 Colbert was writing to Bernini that the Tuileries had been fitted out so that the King could live there and that they could now go ahead with the 'Great Design' for the Louvre. And in the same letter he again asks that Paulo Bernini might come to France, where he could be found a match that would be worthy of his position and talents.<sup>41</sup>

The models made by Mathias de Rossi have long since disappeared, though some trace of them has been preserved in a very roundabout way. At the end of the seventeenth century, in 1695 to be exact, the Swedish architect, Tessin the Younger, who was a passionate admirer of Bernini, asked his compatriot Cronström to search Paris for these models by Rossi. Cronström found one in the studio of Coypel the Elder and made three sketches from it. They were of details, and probably in answer to particular questions put by Cronström. These wash drawings are still preserved in the museum at Stockholm, and have been reproduced in an article by Ragnar Josephson in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*.<sup>42</sup> He finds quite recognizable differences between them and the Marot plates, and is inclined to think that Bernini had taken note of some French criticisms and modified the 'final' plan to meet French taste. The eastern façade in the Marot engraving shows that the proportion of height to breadth is one to four, but in the sketch done from Rossi's model, this is one to five, which gives the front a much less massive appearance. A composite order has taken the place of the Corinthian; the windows are now more heavily decorated, with consoles alleviating the austere elegance of the original fenestration which the French had always criticized as being out of keeping with the grand scale of the building.

At the beginning of 1667 Colbert paid a visit to Rossi's studio, and com-



plained that he could not always decide where the royal residence would be. On 11th March he wrote to Bernini that they were going to 'forge ahead in good earnest with the grand and superb building of the Louvre and Signor Mathias will consult with you about any doubts or difficulties which may arise'. But on 15th May, Colbert sent off another, rather embarrassed, letter to Bernini to say that the King was not going to carry out his plan but had decided to go on with the designs which had been begun by the earlier architects.<sup>43</sup> The excuse given was that no one could tell how long the War of the Spanish Succession would last. Nevertheless Colbert added that one day he hoped to take up Bernini's plans again. He even begged him to come back to Paris to choose a new site for a palace and supervise the work. Such a hope was hardly likely to be realized, for by now Bernini was seventy. Also, if it were possible, as they said, to make the Louvre ready for the King within three years, why construct another palace which, having to be built from scratch, would be even more expensive? And why should the King have a third residence in Paris, which would lack all the traditional prestige of the Louvre?

This time it meant that Bernini's plans were killed stone dead. What Colbert said in his letter could have been forecast ever since a select committee had met in April, consisting of Charles Perrault, Le Vau, Le Brun, Perrault's brother and a doctor called Claude, who was an amateur architect. They were asked for new plans for the palace, and several came up for consideration. The one finally chosen incorporated the colonnade, and work was put in hand in 1668. The work was supervised by Orbay and by Claude Perrault himself.

Why this change took place is still a matter of dispute. Some maintain that it was only on aesthetic grounds:<sup>44</sup> that Bernini's ideas were quite incompatible with French taste. If so, it took Colbert two years to recognize this, or perhaps it was that he eventually gave in to the critics from sheer weariness. They claimed that Bernini's visit to Paris resulted in a decisive rejection of Baroque, and that the French solemnly chose the classical style which can be seen in the colonnade by Perrault [94], or in Mansart's work at Versailles. Another school insists that Bernini's visit influenced French architects more than one might suppose, that the work of Le Vau at Versailles is curiously reminiscent of the Italian architect and that even his colonnade echoes Bernini's style. It is true that the Italian plans showed columns and not a colonnade, but the hidden sloping roofs are definitely one feature that Bernini had suggested. One may well ask whether 'Perrault's plan were not influenced by the Italian plan and that the French architect was, at least partly, guided by the work which had been done by his rival who had been sent away'.<sup>45</sup> In fact, was it not a victory of French architects over a foreigner, and a question of personalities rather than of styles?

Then there is another theory. Obviously the King's word was final, but he was very much swayed by other people—in the first place by Colbert,

but one also comes across the names of Louvois, Le Tellier, and indeed the Duchesse de La Vallière. M. Esmonin thinks that the models made by Rossi were a disappointment and that when Bernini let him return to Paris, he proved incapable of carrying out the work.<sup>46</sup>

There were, doubtless, very many factors that led to the final decision not to carry through Bernini's design, and one may well wonder if the most important of these was not the question of expense which Colbert put forward, even when making false promises. Bernini's plan was very grand, and it was very costly.<sup>47</sup> The sheer scale of it, the amount of material needed, the labour to be employed, the number of statues ordered, added up to a sum that had never been definitely worked out. On top of this, buildings and lands between the Louvre and the Tuileries or Saint-Germain would have to be bought out. The question was whether the Treasury could possibly afford it, and quite obviously they could not. To carry out the plans would have meant economies in many other directions, and Louis XIV, far from giving up the idea of building Versailles, went on with that and was insistent on other new buildings as well. The economic situation was becoming worse and the political outlook even more difficult. Finally, after a peace lasting eight years, war broke out again.

It was obvious that it would cost infinitely less to complete the main quadrangle of the Louvre than to extend the palace toward the Tuileries and Saint-Germain. Also, if the King was to take up residence in the Louvre permanently there was much to be said for a plan that could be carried out in two or three years instead of choosing one which might well, because of its very size, be held up by interminable delays or be stopped altogether by lack of funds.

One other thing cannot be ignored—the fact that there were many pre-eminent French architects who had been asked to tackle this same problem of the Louvre. There is little point in discussing whether they were, reasonably or unreasonably, jealous of Bernini, and even less point in arguing whether they could do something better or merely something different than he. By 1667 the only question was if they were capable of producing something, something worthy of the King. To understand what happened one must remember that, purely from a practical point of view, the authorities decided that they could not raise the money to carry out the designs of Bernini, however much thought, care and expense had already been spent on them; that they had to make the Louvre habitable for the King, and that there were capable architects in Paris.

The final solution had obviously to be more modest than the original plan to build the greatest palace in Europe by the greatest architect. But, given the circumstances, it was probably the best that could be done. It was, if one likes to look at it that way, a victory of commonsense over imagination, and only because of this are qualities usually called classical predominant over those called Baroque. It is quite wrong to talk of a victory of the classicists over the upholders of the Baroque taste.

Both Le Vau and Le Brun were Italianate in their ideas and it is ironic to recall that Claude Perrault, who accused Bernini of being more a decorator than an architect, has been summed up in nearly the same words by M. Hautecoeur.<sup>48</sup> In fact there was nothing except personal reasons to make an unbridgeable gulf between Bernini and the Parisian architects. They were at one in disliking the work of Borromini.<sup>49</sup>

But in France every trend was in favour of an eventual victory of Classicism. In 1671 an Academy of Architecture was founded. The principles it taught were probably most concisely summed up in the *Cours d'Architecture* by Blondel.<sup>50</sup> There was nothing in this book which condemned Bernini's work—he is in fact praised in it—but it looks back to Vitruvius as the arbiter of taste and, like Boileau in his *Art poétique*, lays stress on reason and rule. Henceforward French architects thought in terms of rationalism and of balance, and, at their best, did produce masterpieces in the classical style.

Very probably this movement would have developed, even had Bernini's plans for the Louvre been carried out. But had there been a great Baroque palace in the centre of Paris, the seat of the 'Roi Soleil', visited by every foreigner of note, it might, with its loggias and its oval chapel have had a lasting effect on French architecture through its very presence. At the very least it would have retarded and modified that revolt against Italian taste which had begun in 1665 and won its final victory fifteen years later. Indeed, what is often but wrongly described as a mere check-mate to Bernini had far-reaching effects on French civilization and French history. The outcome of what one might describe as the cold war between Louis XIV and Colbert (a definite struggle which was never referred to openly) was that the King, with his plans for a larger and grander Versailles, triumphed over Colbert, who wished the King to have a proper residence in Paris. The issue at stake was, in fact, greater than the acceptance or rejection of Bernini's plans. The fact that it was Baroque and had been found fault with was of only secondary importance.

It was much rather symptomatic of the contradictory tendencies which marked the whole reign of Louis XIV; it recalls those which characterized Spain under Charles V—a desire to erect works of great magnificence to give prestige and reflect the glories achieved by the monarch and also a realization that there was not, after all, sufficient money to carry out the work.

Bernini had nevertheless left some works in Paris. There was the design for the baldacchino in the Val-de-Grâce [92]. There was the bust of Louis XIV, executed in the 'grand manner' which Bernini had used ten years before for the bust of Cardinal d'Este: but this is too facile a comparison. During that decade he had achieved an added realism, and the later bust does nothing to hide a slight lack of symmetry in the features of the King or to disguise the greedy sensuality which, at that time, was characteristic of



him [89]. But the overriding impression is one of nobility, that you are in the presence of a great personage—the King of France himself. The head so proudly carried and the grave expression are both accentuated by the complex of lines and planes which almost form a frame to the portrait—the long curled wig, the lace of the cravat, the sweep of the sash which the King wears over his right shoulder, rumpled and caught in a breeze as it comes down to half cover the pedestal, give a superb feeling of movement. A bust is usually static, but this is more than a conventional bust: it is the beginning of a statue in which the artist has expressed all the essentials and asks the spectator to use his imagination to complete the whole. One can even feel the wind; there is grandeur, animation, and movement, and even if it had little enough influence on French art, at least Versailles seems the perfect setting for such a masterpiece.

It was such a popular success that Colbert may be excused for asking Bernini to do an equestrian statue of Louis, though only a few weeks before, he had written to tell him that the plan for the Louvre had been abandoned [91].<sup>51</sup> Was this, one wonders, offered as a sop? It may have been, but had France procured a masterpiece from Bernini the sculptor, it would have mitigated the loss of the masterpiece of Bernini the architect that they had rejected.

At this time, too, Bernini was extremely interested in trying to solve the very difficult problems which an equestrian statue can present. He was working on that of the Emperor Constantine for the vestibule of St Peter's. By placing this against a huge piece of drapery sculpted for the background he had arrived at a brilliant solution of how to present a horse rearing without encumbering the base, an achievement which even Mocchi in his magnificent work in the Piazza Cavalli had failed to do.<sup>52</sup> Bernini wished to make the statue of Louis XIV equally dramatic and, since the King was renowned as a soldier, he chose to present him in action, leading his men. The horse rears up, beating the air with its hooves, preparing to jump over some obstacle. The King, dressed as an ancient Roman, turns round as though to urge on his troops, and points forward with his baton.

Bernini took a considerable time to finish the work—possibly he had many commissions in Rome or perhaps after the way he had been treated in Paris, he was rather discouraged. In any case, by the time that the statue arrived in Paris the taste for Italianate had passed, and the spirited beauty of the thing was dismissed as mere gesticulation. There was too much ardour and too much fire, and it showed the King in his early struggles. Everyone would have preferred a severe statue of the King triumphant, waiting calmly and majestically to receive the fruits of his victories.

The statue was, however, kept, though the portrait of Louis XIV was erased from it. Girardon, with his taste for something harmonious and classical for a statue, was the very last person to understand Bernini. Yet it was he who was asked to remodel it (and of course to spoil it). The supporting block of marble he changed into a mass of flames, the head was

altered, and this royal statue became one of Marcus Curtius hurling himself into a blazing abyss. Even that was not the last indignity. It had to be relegated to an ornament in the gardens. Whether it was from ignorance or perhaps as a fine piece of irony it was finally erected near the Swiss lake. France, which had once so nearly accepted plans for the most beautiful of its palaces from Bernini, now did not even know what to do with a statue of his, except hide it away. Certainly there was no question now of anything Baroque holding out any temptation for the French.

# Classicism and French Baroque

FOR a long time there has been a temptation to link the qualities and the triumph of French Classicism with the political scene and the dominant position which France held in the world from 1660 to 1680, but nowadays one is inclined to feel that a truer explanation can be found by considering economic factors and advanced trends of thought, which moulded public opinion rather than followed it. One can no longer attribute the whole of the success of the classical style to decisions of a king or a minister. But one cannot overlook, either, the fact that this most brilliant period, the age of Louis XIV, was a time when European economy was facing very great difficulties. There was a continual fall in the price of foodstuffs and other basic products upon which the whole structure had been built, and a continuously shrinking market. How could these factors fail to slow down or halt entirely that very impetus in commerce and manufactures with which Colbert was trying to galvanize the country?<sup>1</sup> Then in addition there was the cost of an ambitious foreign policy to be borne, and fiscal demands that the people could not endure and that drove them again and again to revolt.

Yet one must admit that problems of national economy did not stand in the way of great triumphs—triumphs which cannot be divorced from the will of the King and his ministers to achieve them. One thing only really counted with Louis XIV, and he admits this in his *Mémoires pour l'Instruction du Dauphin*—the desire for a splendid reign. It was impossible for him to be indifferent to anything which might in any way add to his glory. Sometimes he took upon himself personal responsibility for the direction of matters such as foreign policy, which he regarded as a sphere particularly suited to a King; sometimes questions arose where he found it more difficult to make a personal decision and commonsense led him to listen attentively, though not uncritically, to the opinions of those he knew to be better informed than himself. Then he met Colbert.

One has already seen, in the exchanges between Colbert and Bernini, how much the minister wished to make his master's reign distinguished by



some outstanding achievement. The glory which he dreamed of did not only consist of victories in the field. He did not think, as Richelieu did, that everything should be subordinated to achieving startling defeats over other nations. He thought that finance, building, manufacture, forestry, agriculture, literature, and the Gobelin tapestry industry were equally important. It was of these that he was thinking when one day, talking to Bernini, he declared that the King had probably fifty years still to perfect, or at least advance, his plans.<sup>2</sup> It was an essential factor of Colbert's policy that he believed Time to be on his side, and that it would consolidate the plans he had so patiently fostered.

His was a methodical brain. He wished to lay down a set of principles which, whether they were formulated by himself or by experts whom he considered best qualified to deputize for him, would serve as a reliable basis for action for many years to come. The same faith in the efficacy of a doctrine, once formulated, inspired his policy which remained basically the same, although it had many different forms. He believed that there was a limited amount of bullion in the world; therefore the country whose industries could attract the most money would become the richest and most powerful. With these mercenary motives he told Errard to buy the best antique or modern works of art that came up for sale in Rome, for Louis XIV, and hoped to attract to France all the leading artists in Italy.<sup>3</sup>

Already he had tried to get the best Flemish weavers, the best Venetian glass blowers and the best German metal workers to settle in Paris. If he sent French artists to study in the Roman studios it was in the hope that they might paint as well as the Italians. In 1664 Colbert became Inspector of Works, and reorganized the Academy of Painting of which Le Brun was president. He charged a rather small academy with the task of either composing or checking inscriptions on monuments which were erected to the glorification of Louis XIV. He founded the French Academy in Rome, the Academy of Science in 1666, and in 1671 an Academy of Architecture.

These institutions were to maintain standards that would ensure that works approved by them would be of such quality that they would not merely be acclaimed immediately but have the classic quality that would be realized by posterity. Once the native French artists had been trained, their style, Colbert thought, would be recognized by everyone as supreme. Then foreigners would flock to France, and only to France, to learn everything they had previously learnt in other countries. It was a resolute and logical policy, nicely calculated to enhance the prestige of France. Indeed the plan might be called classical, though its ideals were not so restrained. This desire for power recalled the days of ancient Rome or the Italian Renaissance rather than any ideal of Christian brotherhood. It smacked of paganism; it reeked of royal, or nationalistic, boastfulness; the possibilities of grandeur were always near to bathos.

French Classicism owes a great debt to those architects who managed to

design something popular. Neither Louis XIV nor Colbert can be looked on as founders of a style which had already taken root before their time: nor would either of them have been capable of defining it. Even had both been able to judge the question, their combined authority would have been quite incapable of imposing their point of view on France, had it not itself been ready to welcome the classical style. Yet, without them, French Classicism might not have enjoyed so great a success, had not Louis XIV, as the 'Roi Soleil', incorporated the absolute ideal of monarchy, and his minister so zealously made propaganda for this idea.

Most of the principles which were to be taught in the Academies had been slowly evolved from various sources; they had not been welded into any system or a definite doctrine; they had only the weak and disputable authority of individual opinions.

Le Brun became the great interpreter of the classical doctrine. He put great faith in models from the antique, but it was a faith that he justified by reason and his own experience. It appeared obvious to him that the ancients had achieved a harmonious balance between realism and a perfection of form that at the same time incorporated the most intense concept of beauty. It was therefore reasonable to draw from nature and important not to neglect anatomy. But everything must be directed towards the expression of what is noble and dignified. A nice judgment would eschew fantasy or mere enthusiasm.

If, at this time, Poussin was the model most widely followed, it was because his work was increasingly inspired by antique sculpture. In that he discovered the secret of just proportions. Félibien, one spokesman of the Academy, used almost the same words that Boileau had, in *L'Art poétique*, when he stressed the necessity for genius, 'that illumination of the spirit which cannot be achieved either by study or labour'. But, at the same time, he thought that, endowed with genius, an artist might take facile means to achieve his ends, but he should, on principle, be trained by studying rules, by reflection, and assiduity in work. 'To produce things worthy of posterity, genius must have seen much, read much and studied much.' When he acclaimed the superiority of the Roman painters, he was no doubt thinking of Raphael, though what he said might be applied to all painters trained in Rome. 'They find before them,' he said, 'an inexhaustible source of beauty of design, in well-chosen attitudes, in subtlety of expression, in well-ordered folds of drapery, and in that elevated style to which the ancients raised Nature.'<sup>4</sup>

Thus Rome, which had both an antique and Renaissance heritage, was chosen as a centre for study rather than Venice, a city of few antiquities. Painting was supreme, but Venetian painting was too imaginative and perhaps too naturalistic for the French taste. It was lively, but afforded less pleasure to the true connoisseur than did the Roman school. 'It is the sort of creativeness which may divert us and arouse our emotions.' In principle colour was certainly never theoretically to be sacrificed to pure design, yet





IV The Ambassadors' Staircase at Versailles, designed by Le Vau and built in 1671, was destroyed in 1752. This reconstruction shows the brilliant hues of the original marble and the bust of Louis XIV which dominated the staircase





in some ways it did become complementary, though, of course, an indispensable complement.

The quarrel between those who see Poussin as the greatest of classical painters and those who admire Rubens as the greatest Baroque artist has its seeds in this order of preference.

At this particular time, Italian critics were full of praise for Colbert for the choice he had made, and his wish to establish a doctrine that could be defined. Belfort dedicated his *Vie des peintres* to him and congratulated him on sending young French artists to grow up in contact with the antiquities, triumphal arches, columns and the Capitol of Rome. Bellori, who admired the antique and pure design, even refused to call anyone an architect who, in an exuberance of imagination, deformed buildings and façades with broken angles or curving lines.<sup>5</sup> He spoke almost the same language as Chambray did. Blondel upheld a similar thesis in his speech when he opened the Academy of Architecture (on 31st December 1671), and in the lectures that followed. He invoked the authority of the theorists who were disciples of Vitruvius—Vignola and Scamozzi, for instance: both recommend respect for the orders, the just observation of proportions, and the choice of suitable decoration. Yet he did not stint his praises of the modern Italians: neither of Pietro da Cortona nor of Bernini. Even when it came to Borromini, he was not wholly disapproving. When talking of him, he did, however go on to condemn 'the architect who has begun the church of the Theatine Fathers in Paris and, wishing to follow the example of Borromini, has chosen everything that was most extravagant in his work'.<sup>6</sup>

Father Guarini, to whom he was referring, had planned for Sainte-Anne-la-Royale a Baroque church which would have been one of the most interesting buildings in Paris. But it fell a victim to the taste for the classical style and was never carried out. Perhaps one should remember that Father Guarini showed great interest in and sympathy with the Gothic style, and that Blondel remained hostile to the old French tradition. It made no difference that it had lent to the native genius a brilliance unequalled in the whole of Europe.

His idea of architecture, though not so narrow as is sometimes supposed, excluded all works that did not conform to certain rules. I say 'certain' rules, because the Gothic could equally claim to have its own, which were both organic and logical. But the only rules that he would admit were those that derived from Vitruvius.

Father Guarini's were more liberal and gave architecture the right to be as varied as possible. Their views were almost diametrically opposed: one opens up vast horizons, the other fences in the field. Marcel Raymond's remark takes on a new significance. 'Of all the words which Baroque has spoken, beauty, tenderness, joyousness, femininity, or robust health, force, and majesty, the word that for us remains the most cherished is that of freedom of choice.'<sup>7</sup> France, in this last third of the century, when there was infinite variety of models from which she could so easily have chosen,

officially decided to become doctrinaire. It was, however, a doctrine that sought to encourage what might be considered attractive, though serious. It had two merits: it was idealistic and spurned the facile. It had two drawbacks: the threat of smothering anything impulsive and the power to forbid any daring change in the status quo.

There was the court and there was the city: the court was the source of all favours, the only place where one could make a career even if one were not by birth or marriage a member of the small group of courtiers; the city must be regarded even then as being the capital of France, with its complex social structure of financiers, politicians, lawyers, bourgeois from both commerce and the new industries, artisans. To all these must be added the élite of the provinces, educated people, who might lag behind Paris in their tastes, but who were quite capable of keeping up with the literature of the day, and of praising it or condemning it.

The court and the city (sometimes in agreement but more often at loggerheads) were the only bodies who could establish the reputation of a great writer. This period produced the great works of Molière, Racine, La Fontaine and Boileau, with their detailed observation and analysis, where man was the focal interest and the style was subject to constant order and discipline. Their language rejected the extravagant imagery and elaborations of the Baroque style and became clear and precise, but at the same time extremely flexible and capable of expressing the finest distinctions of thought. Posterity was to admire this supreme example of Classicism, both for its substance and its form, and even contemporary society appreciated its worth. While the great conflict between the ancients and the moderns was raging, the self-confident, but at the same time not vain-glorious or ridiculous boast, could be heard—‘We have done just as well as the ancients.’ Nevertheless, it was the ancients who had shown the way. In tragedy, which was regarded as the most noble literary form, the new writers turned to ancient Greece and Rome for their plots. If some allusions seem to have a contemporary application to people or events, if there are contemporary references—and perhaps the ingenious researches of present-day critics find too many—it was certainly neither these allusions nor these references which were responsible for the success of their work. The French public of the seventeenth century had a great taste for tragedies which depicted passions they could understand and which enabled them to identify themselves with the sufferings of these great semi-legendary characters in their tragic fate. In comedy or satire the public preferred the representation of the evils and injustice of human behaviour, in which they knew they themselves shared because this was the nature of the society in which they lived and perhaps of society throughout all ages. The fact that they could see these evils represented and recognize them gave them a certain pleasure and provided in a sense an aid to better living. All the classical work of this period gave intellectual satisfaction. But this ‘intellec-



tual satisfaction' was much wider than mere abstract reasoning; it was something that could illuminate and purify everyday life and fill the heart with new courage. This synthesis between the intellectual faculties of man and his everyday experience, expressed in a perfect form, is the secret of what Antoine Adam has aptly called 'interior classicism'. This has nothing to do with formal academism or any of its conventions, although it is too often confused with them.

But at the very time when these masterpieces were being created, there were other tendencies which might have killed them. Court and city: one would have supposed that the city would have been for Molière, and that he would share the taste of the groundlings who enjoyed seeing a marquis held up to ridicule, and that the court would have been for Racine, enchanted by majestic solemnity and classical themes. Actually, Molière needed the backing of the court and royal patronage; nor was Racine behindhand in seeking them. It was the royal command that called forth *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and *Le Malade Imaginaire*. They were no less polished masterpieces than plays written for the Palais-Royal theatre in Paris. *Iphigénie*, the drama which is closely modelled on the antique, and which sets out to prove 'that changing manners and the transformation of society scarcely touch the fundamental feelings of humanity',<sup>8</sup> was first performed at Versailles. It was included in the programme of that extraordinary festival week in August 1674, just ten years after the performance of *Plaisirs de l'isle enchantée*. This time the King wished to celebrate the success of his politics and his arms in the second and final conquest of Franche-Comté. Nevertheless the approbation of the court would have counted for little had the Parisian public not in its turn flocked to see the play and shed tears during the performances at the Hôtel de Bourgogne.<sup>9</sup>

Not only was this a great age for prose and verse drama: there was also the opera. In 1672, Lulli again took out a licence from the Academy of Music (which had been founded three years previously), for the monopoly throughout France of presenting verse set to music. This time the licence ran for eight years,<sup>10</sup> and Lulli took into partnership an Italian called Carlo Vigarani. It was a fruitful combination. From the pastoral masques which were then the fashion Vigarani, by introducing one modification after another, really created, with Lulli, French opera. He wrote praises of the King which served as prologues to tragedies which usually had five acts.

From the musical point of view, the orchestra played an important part, although recitative, and arias, in which the words (and the narrative) were clearly intelligible, still remained predominant. The romantic and elegant charm of a court entertainment remained. For fifteen years, Lulli reigned unchallenged over the musical world; they were the same years that saw the dictatorship of Le Brun over the fine arts. Quinault and then Thomas Corneille were asked for scripts, while Bérain was called on for the décor and costumes. The cycle began with *Cadmus et Hermione* in 1673. It ended

in 1686 with a performance of *Armide*, a few months before Lulli was accidentally killed.

These operas, which were later forgotten for so long, gave France at the time a prestige which till then had been the prerogative of Venice, and in France itself the operas aroused as much enthusiasm as the works of Racine or Molière. One must remember, too, that for a whole decade a new opera was produced every year, while the theatre could offer nothing comparable. Molière had died in 1673, and after the production of *Phèdre*, in 1677, Racine forsook the theatre to take up his duties as the King's Chronicler. It is important to remember—a point aptly stressed by Daniel Mornet—that though between 1660 and 1699 there were almost three hundred and fifty plays produced in various styles, 'at least half of the plays which were applauded by the contemporaries of Molière and Racine were in a greater or lesser degree totally different from those which posterity has chosen as representative of the classical drama'.<sup>11</sup>

Both court and city favoured Classicism, but neither of them found it a complete answer. If French Classicism asserted itself through original characteristics which were opposed to the Baroque, it is no less true that it grew from a firm foundation of Baroque tendencies and modes of expression.

What a strange history Versailles has had. When it was built it was the marvel of the age; later it became the symbol of the faults of a detested monarchy and was indeed almost made responsible for them; after the Revolution it was fated to become nothing more than a museum; then once again it became the focal point of European history: the proclamation of the German Empire and the signing of the Peace Treaty of 1919 gave it once more its proper importance in the eyes of the world. It is now realized that Versailles is one of the most amazing achievements of modern civilization. Though it has been remodelled over and over again throughout two centuries, Versailles as it has come down to us gives, in spite of some deplorable omissions, a fair impression of what Louis XIV wished to create.

It was carried out with astonishing speed: it bears witness by itself to the number and the quality of artists to be found in France at that time, and reflects the progress of the whole nation during the century. When one realizes that it was native talent that built, decorated and furnished this gigantic residence in the space of a few years, that an intractable countryside was transformed into gardens unrivalled by anything else in Europe, every Frenchman could say with Molière:

On travaille aujourd'hui d'un air miraculeux  
Jamais en toute chose on n'a vu si bien faire . . .<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless the original plans for Versailles could be called neither wise nor rational. As the magnificent enterprise went on and new ideas were

put forward and carried out, one might almost say that they never coincided with the immediate national interests or with the necessities of general policy. While the King should have been thinking only of the Louvre, his inclination was for an estate where he could indulge in court fêtes more freely than was possible either at Saint-Germain or Fontainebleau. Le Nôtre had already begun to open out the gardens and, stage by stage, thrust Nature back more and more into the distance.

At first the small château built by Louis XIII was left comparatively unchanged. The simple addition of pavilions and the decoration of the courtyard with busts modified its character as a hunting lodge and made it more suitable for receptions. In 1669, when final efforts were being made to complete the Louvre, and just at the moment when all efforts and available funds were needed for it, the King decided to build a new château at Versailles. It would be his own, but it could serve no purpose that was not already covered by Saint-Germain and Fontainebleau. The whole project was unwarranted, and undertaken purely for Louis's personal satisfaction, a princely indulgence in the vainglory of building which was then almost universal amongst the great. Certainly, had the public good been considered, this great Baroque, Italianate design was hardly justified at the conclusion of a war, with no more quick victories to come, and in every field difficulties to be faced.<sup>13</sup>

—The plan eventually selected was Le Vau's. This avoided the destruction of the little château of Louis XIII, and the reverence Louis XIV showed for the work carried out by his father and ancestors has often been commented on. Such care was in keeping with the monarchical conception of the family and also with the spirit of the age, which considered it virtuous to maintain and pass on one's inheritance. In a society which was still little removed from an agrarian way of life, where tradition was paramount, this was normal. There was also another consideration: the programme was going to cost fantastic sums, and so some palliative might be found in paring down on details. The chance of keeping and re-using anything was not to be overlooked: it was what Colbert described as 'cobbling'. However, it played a very small part compared with the immensity of the new buildings.

Le Vau surrounded the old château by a great palace in the shape of a U. Facing the gardens, which had to be replanned, the beautiful façade shows two pavilions, broad enough to have seven windows; on the *piano nobile* the central windows are advanced and framed by columns. There are three storeys, and the slope of the roof is hidden by a balustrade. Between the pavilions, at the level of the *piano nobile*, the façade is set back behind the terrace on ground level. The whole has an Italian feeling about it and recalls Bernini's designs for the Louvre [95].

The layout of the new palace, with its interior courtyards—which had certainly played an essential part in Bernini's plans—and the great care taken in placing the rooms, has led some art historians to talk of a pre-



occupation with urban architecture. Versailles, secondary perhaps to being the background for court fêtes, was to be somewhere to stay, though what sort of sojourns were envisaged remained undefined. The passion for large-scale fêtes showed no signs of abating. In fact it had a resurgence, more lively than ever, when the new war afforded any excuse for them. The outbreak of war had called forth detestation, but after the first dazzling victories, public opinion, half admiring and half dazed, accepted it. The victory that led to the recapture of Franche-Comté, though it meant the war would spread considerably, was one which Louis XIV made the occasion for a fête at Versailles more brilliant than ever. It lasted six days, and was marked by concerts and operas. On the fourth day for example the *Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus* by Lulli and Quinault was performed. The plays included *Alceste*, played in the Marble Court, *Le Malade Imaginaire* which was given in the garden theatre, and Racine's *Iphigénie*. There were banquets, fountain displays and illuminations. It ended with a firework display, of unheard-of magnificence, along the great canal.

For the interior decorations Le Brun again used and developed the style which had already won him renown at the Louvre. Allegorical paintings combined with the fluid lines of their frames and stucco motifs to form one whole. Though it was in contradiction to what he preached, these pictures were neither intellectual nor calm. Imagination, movement and vivid colouring were essential, for how could one handle royal themes except with magnificence and dash? Nor was this really going against the grain, for his temperament was as much Baroque as classical [101].

Later rebuilding led to the destruction of one superb work in the north wing of the new palace. A two-winged staircase, designed by d'Orbay, rose against a huge *trompe l'oeil* painting on the main wall where Le Brun had depicted people and animals on a palace balcony [IV].

Pure Classicism would not be found in this palace, for the general inspiration and most of the details of the execution were still Italianate. Nevertheless, despite this beginning, Versailles, with its unceasing development, grew farther and farther away from Italy. When sculptures were ordered on the grand scale in 1674, the themes commissioned were the mythological and universal subjects so well known in the Italian courts, and whose every variation had been pointed out by Cesare Ripa in his famous book *Iconologia*. The four elements, the four seasons, the quarters of the day, the four corners of the world, the four characters of man—all these could be found in the decorations carried out in Paris in 1660, or later, in the fête of *l'Ile enchantée*. The artists who were chosen to reinterpret them were Coysevox, Girardon, Tubi and Le Hongre. Though they followed their personal taste, they were all faithful to the teachings of the Academy and sought a connexion with antique art. Noble attitudes, grace of movement and calmness of expression combined to give an air of happy serenity and a stability in strong contrast to the rhythm and passion of Italian art. The sculpture of Versailles, much more markedly than the paintings or the

architecture, banishes Baroque from the royal demesne.] It is easy to understand why the statue of Bernini could not fit in here: even the Baroque *Milo of Crotona* by Puget, seems, merely by recalling physical suffering and mental anguish, to strike a false note in this symphony of happiness and light [98, 99 & 100].

From 1679 onwards Hardouin-Mansart gave Versailles its final form, which has been spared in spite of alarming inclinations to rebuild during the eighteenth century, or the heavy-handed restorations of the nineteenth century. Taking as his starting-point the new palace, which he left as the main and central motive of the whole, he enlarged and consolidated the terraces to the north and south to carry the long wings which give the palace its horizontal fullness [96 & 97]. He made the magnificent stairway of The Hundred Steps to run down to the orangery. The two pavilions of the façade were linked up by a gallery. The interior was decorated by mirrors facing the windows; for the vaulting Le Brun painted large compositions celebrating the royal victories. Thus, from the Salon de la Guerre to the Salon de la Paix, with the mirrors and the chandeliers reflecting and multiplying the flames of the candles, the décor seemed to embody the aim of all Louis XIV's politics [101]. One could believe that all the wars which had brought him so much glory remained subordinate to the wish for peace, the peace which Paris had so longed for at the beginning of his reign. One could also believe that all the sacrifices demanded of the nation had only been made to support an effort that strove to attain peace; if it was now achieved, the King could savour his triumph in an incomparable palace, and dedicate himself to the well-being of his people. The appearances were superb, if in stark contradiction with reality, and there was grandeur in proclaiming such an ideal, even if it were unattainable.

↳ Nothing within the palace was out of harmony with the whole. Le Brun either supplied or supervised the designs for furniture, for cabinets inlaid with ebony or mother of pearl, for the carpets and the finely coloured tapestries, for the dignified thrones and, finally, for the admirable silver work. Themes were borrowed from mythology and fable: the animal kingdom was used, and the Raphael tradition of grotesques. Allusions to the glory of the reign recur incessantly. Everything was to contribute to the impression of ostentatious richness and grandeur. The craftsmanship shows an astonishing mastery that had been acquired within only a few years in the royal factories and studios. It was shown, not so much in accessories or everyday objects, as in creating an organic element which was indispensable to the beauty of the whole. Today, with much of it completely vanished or only left in part, we see but a mutilated Versailles. ↪

The gardens outside form another composition which may aptly be called architectural, so carefully arranged are the sheets of water, the terraces, the fanciful elegance of the *parterres* and the great canal as broad as a river, indeed the whole logical progression from the design in stone to the

open countryside. There is no doubt that the supremacy of Versailles and its greatest classical quality was shown by the fact that the most varied groups of people and the most diverse artistic styles were brought together to form one single and clearly intelligible work of art.

It could only happen when many circumstances were favourable; these the historian can recognize, though he may not, with an entirely clear conscience, point out any single one as the principal and decisive factor. There had been steady progress for several centuries; the country was rich and, whatever misfortunes may have overtaken individual people, society as a whole had benefited; there was also the political will which, however tarnished, had never irretrievably given up the ideals of reason and of grandeur; and consent, whether spontaneous or extorted, was forthcoming from many individual quarters—it was a taste far more complex and full of subtleties than that of any one person could be, but one in which personal qualities could maintain their rights and influence. Versailles, indeed, bears witness not only to the monarchy under Louis XIV and the brief period of its full expansion, but also to the slow evolution of French civilization of which this palace was one of the most beautiful manifestations. In comparison with what had gone before—the religious works of medieval France which either turned away from or did not know the ‘ideal’ beauty of the antique world, the Italian Renaissance which was again inspired by that ideal, the churches and palaces of Italian Baroque—Versailles is the outcome of a France that was at the same time heir to the past and an innovator now emancipated enough to create something that would, in its turn, be looked upon as a model.

Everything about this new masterpiece that could be considered disconcerting and odd, its inability fully to satisfy aesthetic demands, and its violation, in spite of everything, of true proportion have never been better expounded than by a contemporary in a celebrated passage which is true and unjust in almost equal parts. It is worth quoting in full. The injustice lies in the absolute refusal to be charmed, and that is due to the unflagging hatred Saint-Simon felt for Louis XIV, without whom there would never have been a Versailles. Such passion was perhaps necessary to free the mind from too blind a compliance. The truth of the indictment still remains to modify the largely justified satisfaction which we derive from a general view which obscures the meretricious methods employed.

‘At Versailles he set up one building after another according to no scheme of planning. Beauty and ugliness, spaciousness and meanness were roughly tacked together. The royal apartments at Versailles are fantastically inconvenient, with back-views over the privies and other dark and evil-smelling places. Truly, the magnificence of the gardens is amazing, but to make the smallest use of them is disagreeable, and they are in equally bad taste. To reach any shade one is forced to cross a vast, scorching expanse and, after all, there is nothing to do in any direction but go up and down





- 95 ABOVE. Le Vau's garden façade for Versailles included two corner pavilions, with a gap between them. BELOW. The garden façade, from 1678 onwards, by Hardouin-Mansart, gave Versailles its definitive character

96





- 97 General view of Versailles where the palace bears witness, not only to the greatness of Louis XIV, but equally to French civilization, which had gradually become enriched: this is one of its finest forms of expression

RIGHT. The Rape of Proserpine, by Girardon. The sculpture at Versailles, much more than the architecture and painting there, tended to repulse the Baroque influence from the new royal residence

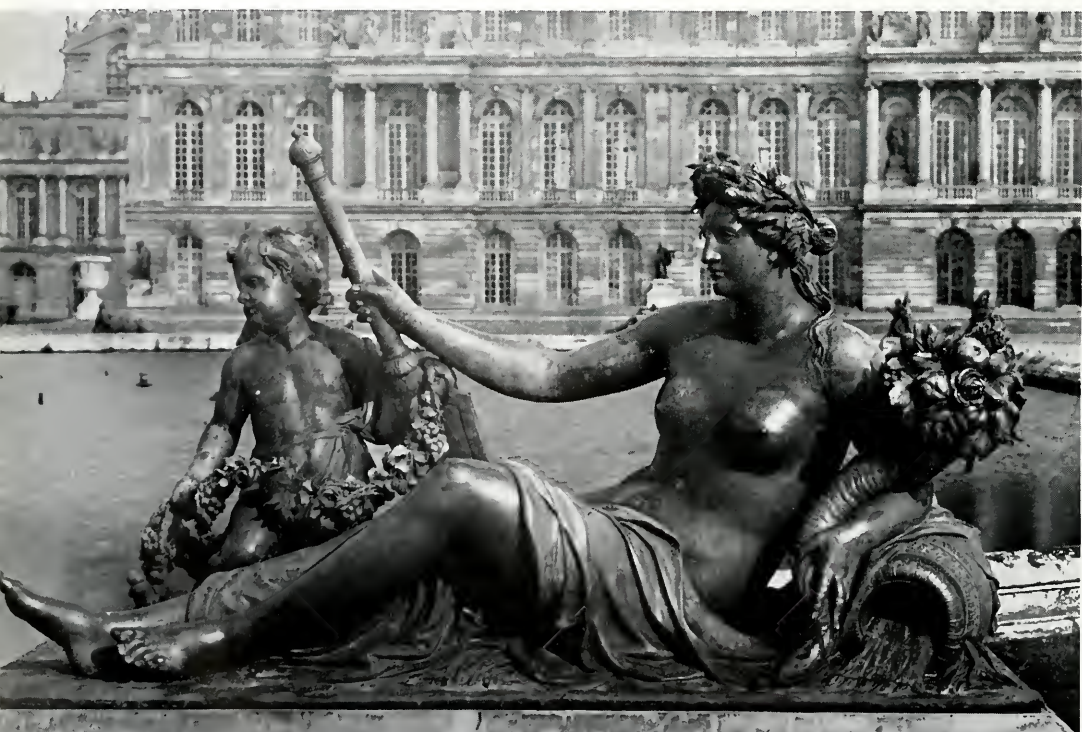








- 99 Statues in the gardens of Versailles (ABOVE), and in the water garden (BELOW), by Le Hongre. Faithful to academic teaching, but following his own taste, he tried to go back to classical art. His sculptures all indicate a stability far removed from the passion and rhythm of Italian art
- 100







Detail of a painting in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. In 1678 Le Brun decorated the vault with huge compositions in honour of the Royal victories





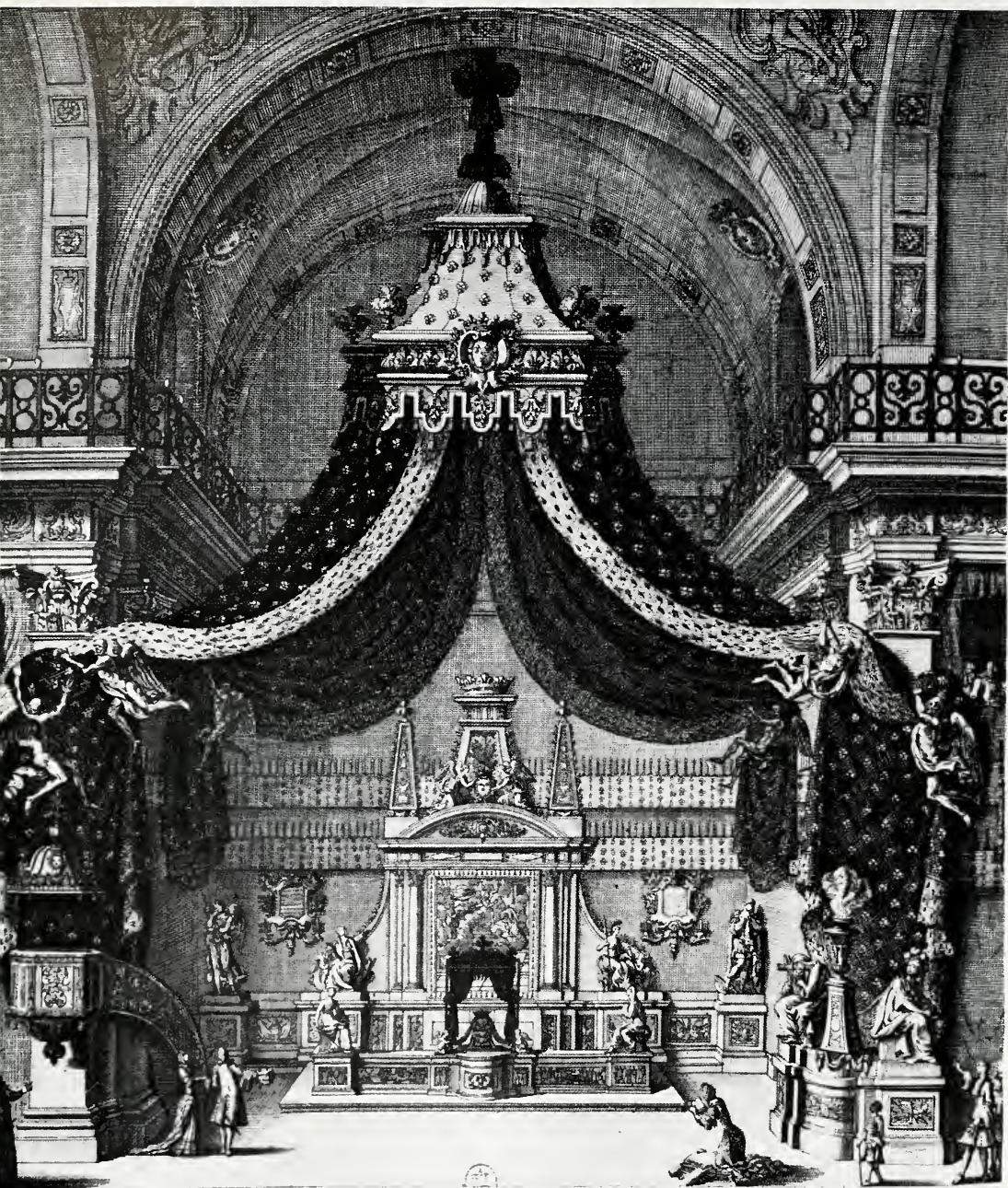
102 The funeral of Chancellor Séguier, designed by Le Brun, and one of his masterpieces. His light touch, ordered imagination, and true sense of grandeur and emotion have given it the perfect rightness of classical art





The King ordered a special service for the funeral of Turenne in Notre Dame. Turenne had been the 'sword of the monarchy' and the decoration for the ceremony was entrusted to Bérain, who asked Father Ménéstrier to help him





*oration funebre de la Chapelle de  
Jesuites de Paris pour l'inhumation  
is de Bourbon Prince de Conde'  
Berain: in et delin*



*Conde' dans l'Eglise de la Maison profane  
du Cœur de S. A. S. Monseigneur  
Premier Prince du Sang.*

*Dolmar: sculp*

- 104 Bérain's design for the burial of Condé's heart. This was given to the Jesuit Church (now Saint Paul et Saint Louis), in which the great general had asked that his heart be kept









106

The superb and supremely Baroque reredos of the church of L'Isle sur Sorgue in the Vaucluse incorporates a large painting of the Assumption of the Virgin. ABOVE, Detail



107





**108** ABOVE LEFT. Central altarpiece of the Fontaine Couverte, Mayenne. In the Laval district, where marble and limestones are found, many such reredoses were built and decorated up to the eighteenth century

**109** ABOVE RIGHT. Altarpiece of the south transept of the Fontaine Couverte. During the winter of 1694 Pierre Barauderie carved this Adoration of the Shepherds, evidently using local peasants as models

**110**

RIGHT. The altarpiece of the church of St Jean de Béré is one of the finest in the district, the work of G. Robelot. Its white stone decoration consists of a profusion of garlands, volutes, putti and caryatids, with incrustations of dark marble







III

The altarpiece of the Church of Tepotzotlan in Mexico. The most amazing achievements in the Baroque reredos are to be found in Spain and Latin America



III 2

The altarpiece of Comana in Finistère is an example of a carved reredos carried out with engaging naïvety by artisans who did not shrink from tackling the greatest Baroque subjects: the Eternal Father, angels and garlands of flowers



a little hill, after which the gardens end. The broken stones on the paths burn one's feet, yet without them one would sink into sand or the blackest mud.

'Who could help being repelled and disgusted at the violences done to Nature? Numberless springs have been forced to flow into the gardens from every side making them lush, overgrown and boggy; they are perceptibly damp and unhealthy and their smell is even more so. The fountains and other effects are indeed incomparably fine, although they require a great deal of attention, but the net result is that one admires and flies.

'On the courtyard side, the constriction is suffocating and the vast wings recede quite pointlessly. On the garden front, one is able to appreciate the beauty of the building as a whole, but it looks like a palace that has been destroyed by fire because the upper storey and the roofs are still missing. The chapel towers above it because of Mansart's attempt to force the King to add an entire upper storey. As it now is, it presents the distressing appearance of some vast hearse. Everywhere in the chapel the craftsmanship is exquisite, but the design is nil, for everything was planned from the point of view of the tribune, because the King never went below.

'But one might be for ever pointing out the monstrous defects of that huge and immensely costly palace, and of its outhouses that cost even more, its orangery, kitchen gardens, kennels, larger and smaller stables, all vast, all prodigiously expensive. Indeed, a whole city has sprung up where before was only a poor tavern, a windmill and a little pasteboard château, which Louis XIII built so as to avoid lying on straw.'<sup>14</sup> -)

We may say that the classical style at Versailles predominated, but this was not to the exclusion of all Baroque characteristics. These were again to appear more forcibly at Marly (now destroyed) as though to show that they were indispensable in any decoration that enhanced the grandeur and glory of royalty. In Paris itself, the parish churches (Saint Louis-en-l'Île, Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas), private houses and public buildings such as the Invalides further identified French work with the classical ideal. But it would need a fanatic to undertake a study into all aspects of French civilization of the day, to determine which works should be called purely classical and which betray a leaning towards the Baroque.

From the many instances to be found, two illustrate in a striking manner the rivalry which went on between Italian influence and what was henceforward to be the declared French style, as well as the coexistence of the classical and the Baroque in one style. On one hand we have the decoration of churches when a great person died, and the elaborate funerals to which the seventeenth century gave so much thought and care: on the other hand, there are the reredoses, with which it was common at this date to ornament the altars, that reflect not only religious ideas but also contemporary taste. Most revealing of all are the reredoses to be found in

country churches. They help us to understand what the humble and lowly people imagined and cherished.

What is one to think of these great funereal festivities which were celebrated throughout the seventeenth century in Europe upon the death of a Pope, a king, or a prince? They gave rise to a style of decoration that was quite unique and has often been condemned as bad taste, with the macabre exhibition of death-masks and skeletons, the worldly show and profusion of candles which surrounded the empty coffin whose role was only symbolic and figurative.

A funeral ceremony or a funeral feast—the two go together and one recognizes again the contradiction that seems to lie at the heart of the Baroque.<sup>15</sup>

Many trends seem to meet here. Representations of death were known in the Middle Ages, and elaborate funeral ceremonies took place. During the Renaissance, artists took an increasing interest in depicting anatomies and the theme of death in the midst of life and its pleasures becomes an obsession in literature.

It was as widespread amongst the Protestants or free thinkers as amongst the Catholics. But the crux of the matter doubtless lies in one of the fundamental controversies which divided the Catholics and Protestants during the Reformation, namely the validity of prayers for the dead.<sup>16</sup> The Council of Trent, by decreeing them necessary and effective, opened the way to a renewal of a funeral liturgy. In this way a definite doctrine was laid down, but, when praying for the dead, the living also were succoured and consoled in their sorrow by the encouragement given to them by their Christian hopes.<sup>17</sup> In a hierarchical society where all eyes looked towards the great, their death would inevitably be an occasion of particular solemnity, more eloquent because of the greater contrast between the riches and favours they had enjoyed in life and the nullity to which death had reduced them; their merits or failings were gravely weighed by all.

To put it slightly differently, though many elements of the funeral rites came from various old traditions, the elaboration and scale with which they were celebrated at the end of the sixteenth century (first of all in Italy) would be inexplicable without the background of the religious ideology of the Counter-Reformation and an aristocratic society. One of the earliest of these great funeral decorations was carried out by the painter Sebastiano Folli in Siena cathedral for the funeral service of Bishop Piccolomini in 1578.<sup>18</sup> But it was the Florentine court which took the greatest interest in these funeral celebrations. The Grand Dukes were punctilious in holding services not only when one of their family died, but also on the death of foreign princes. These Florentine decorations, with their ingenious variations on one theme, were widely known through the prints which were made of each ceremony in honour of the deceased.

Doubtless the richness and luxury of the decorations, which seem to us so alien and macabre, did in the end obscure the pious intention of the



ceremony, or at least dissolve it in the spectacular beauty of the settings. Yet it would be rash of us to attribute our own reactions to people of another age, or to deny that a religious effect might have been achieved by such theatrical means.

What concerns us more here is that this type of decoration had a great success and spread to countries outside Italy. It took the place of the more ancient rituals, which in many cases were no less elaborate.

Rome saw one funeral which was remarkable for its grandeur, that of Sixtus V, who died in August 1590. Domenico Fontana, who had been the Pope's favourite architect, and had carried out the great works which transformed Rome during his pontificate, erected fabric in the form of a huge catafalque which looked as though it was made of marble.<sup>19</sup> On a platform, approached by eight steps, there was an arcaded rotunda. In front of the arches were allegorical statues: Religion, Pontifical Authority, Charity, Magnificence, Providence and Faith. The cornice carried figures on a reduced scale copied from the Trajan and Antonine columns and four obelisks. The great achievements of this 'town-planning' Pope were recalled in his honour. The catafalque was crowned with a cupola that resembled the dome of St Peter's, and in the place of the lantern a cross seemed to shed its benediction on the death-bed, which was supported by four lions. In the rotunda lay the coffin of the Pope, guarded by figures of the cardinal virtues—Justice, Prudence, Temperance and Strength.

It was a long time before France adopted the new fashion and in the collection of prints in the Bibliothèque Nationale we can follow the slow evolution that led up to it. The French artists knew how to erect magnificent tombs and ornament them with praying figures. But that was not the same thing. The Italians never confused architecture or monumental statuary with funeral decoration, though there was much in common between the two. When Anne of Austria died in 1666, Carlo Vigarani declared that the Parisian decorators could turn out nothing suitable and that their style was well below Italian standards.

In contrast with this, there was a funeral ceremony carried out in Grenoble by the Jesuits that revealed the existence of a designer with original ideas. Father Ménestrier was familiar with the Italian models, but he himself laid down principles for this type of decoration. In his opinion the proper thing to do was to choose a subject from a passage of Scripture that could inform the whole design and, with its allegories and figures, would be an appropriate eulogy of the deceased. 'Modesty,' he declared in his treatise *Décorations funèbres*, 'modesty is a praiseworthy virtue in the living but, after their death, it is far from our duty to be modest on their behalf, and we should pay that tribute to their merit which they had refused to accept during their lifetime.' It was therefore seemly 'to add to the black drapes, the candles and the lugubrious chants of the church, inscriptions, pictures and dramatic scenes that will bring back the virtues and illustrious actions of the dead, such as was done in the apotheoses in antiquity, so

146 celebrated by the Greeks, and so well known to the Romans, who had borrowed them from the Jews . . .'<sup>20</sup>

In the commemoration service for Anne of Austria at Grenoble, he chose the theme of the weeping Graces. 'Indeed,' he says, 'the name of Anne is synonymous with Grace in holy speech. It is from Grace that monarchs derive all their greatness, which they acknowledge in their titles. We are in a town that has received its name from the Graces, and it is in the Val-de-Grâce that this pious Queen wished her heart to lie after her death.'

One could see here 'the change of the deceitful Graces into so many skeletons, which show what are the Graces of this world, or what they will one day become'. The Graces of this world: Life, Honours and Riches, carrying emblems that showed what they represented, are contrasted with the immortal Graces: Virtue, Fame and Eternity. Round the tomb were palms entwined with branches of cedar, because these are symbols of a beatific eternity in the Holy Scriptures. '*Justus ac Palma florebit, sicut Cedrus Libani multiplicatur.*'<sup>21</sup>

Father Ménestrier became very experienced, and settled down in Paris in 1670. There, there were great preparations for the funeral ceremonies of the Duc de Beaufort, Admiral of France, and grandson of Henri IV, who had fallen at the siege of Candia in 1699, in the war against the Turks. Clement IX had asked Bernini to design the catafalque for the service that was held on 28th September 1669 in St Peter's. The base was given animation by two richly decorated wings spreading out from a great cartouche in the centre which displayed the ducal coat of arms. It supported a fantastic spectacle. Above a trophy of cannons, flags and breast-plates, two immense winged skeletons held aloft a pyramid on which the various deeds of prowess performed by Beaufort were depicted and inscribed. Two flying angels blew trumpets of Fame, while they presented the Palm of Glory and the Mirror of Truth. Crowning all was the statue of the Duke, with sword and buckler. It was, with its heroics and its pathos, a superbly Baroque work. In Paris Henri Gissey, who had designed the *Chambre du Roi*, was put in charge of decorations at Notre Dame, where a commemorative service was to be held on 13th August 1670. His design showed a revival of the French style. He planned a *castrum doloris* in three stages: at the base was a great plinth decorated with a carbuncle of the Beaufort arms and entwined anchors to recall his naval career. At the two sides abutting the volutes, skeletons supported a platform on which crouching allegorical figures alternate with tall candelabra. Higher up, a large statue sits in front of a draped coffin and weeping putti reverse their flambeaux. This funereal composition could hold its own with Bernini's, and, though it is less spirited and more static, both works express the same emotion.<sup>22</sup> Eighteen months later, on 25th January 1672, the aged Chancellor Séguier died. His funeral was the cause of so many quarrels about precedence that it was robbed of the pomp which was to be expected and it was the Royal



Academy of Painting and Sculpture, of which he had been patron, that held a commemoration service of great magnificence in his honour. It was held in the Church of the Oratory on 5th May and it fell to Le Brun to 'invent' the decorations [102]. The entire church was draped in black. At the bottom of the choir a large cartouche displayed the Séguier arms. At the sides painted panels recalled his career, and throughout the decorations the ducal coronet alternated with the Chancellor's cap. At the level of the galleries these were held out at arms' length by large-scale figures of skeletons just covered by their dry and withered skin. On the *castrum doloris* four allegorical figures supported a gigantic urn above which the draped coffin and ducal crown were visible. Four other figures of death, swaddled in winding sheets, lowered immense torches. But the most successful part of the decoration was a pyramid of candles which hung from the ceiling and formed a baldacchino that seemed to be held up by two large angels in flight.

By breaking the design into two parts the cenotaph achieved a rare distinction and appeal. There was a moving nobility in the severe lines of the plinth, the urn, and the coffin. Then the free space between them and the baldacchino made the flight of the angels, full of strength and grace, seem more natural. One might venture to say that the flames of the candles on the pyramid brought something living into this monument to death. This is certainly one of the most beautiful of funeral decorations of which we have an engraving.<sup>23</sup> Le Brun had achieved a masterpiece, as he had twelve years ago with the obelisk in the Place Dauphine. His Latin delicacy, his disciplined imagination, his balanced feeling for grandeur and emotion gave this decoration, which was inspired by Baroque ideals, a perfect classical expression.

In 1675, Turenne fell in battle, and the King decided that a solemn service should be held for him in Notre Dame. Bérain, who had succeeded Gissey, was in charge of the decorations. He asked Father Ménestrier if he could draw upon his knowledge, and it was the symbolism worked out by this ingenious Jesuit that marked these funeral poms. Never before had been seen, not even perhaps in Italy, so Baroque and so allusive a *castrum doloris* [103].<sup>24</sup>

The cenotaph was an immense round tower; through the broad open doorway could be seen the coffin of the hero. On the rusticated base which supported the tower, there was a throng of figures in attitudes expressive of glory, sorrow, triumph and humiliation. Some symbolized the virtues of the deceased—piety, love of the King, military valour, wisdom, merit, fame, glory—while others were of the vices which he had conquered: envy, rashness, hastiness, sloth, self-interest and impiety. On both sides of the tower were gigantic trees thrusting out palm branches to entwine three crowns, the first of flowers, the second of laurels, and the third of stars. Two rows of candles encircled the tower. High up were the blazons of all the princely families connected with Turenne, and on the roof itself

was an urn of gigantic proportions and two gesticulating figures. Death menaces it with his scythe, but from the urn there steps out a winged figure of Immortality serenely contemplating a portrait of the hero.

Father Ménestrier published a booklet which contained the key to all these mysteries. It was necessary too, for even the most learned spectator, however fertile his imagination or thorough his training in contemporary taste, would have missed some of the allusions.

How significant was the choice of the tower, for instance. It could hardly be bettered, for it stood for the tower of David. 'His name of La Tour (Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne) and his coat of arms which display a round tower, make this an individual design.' Then Father Ménestrier goes on to explain how appropriate it is to place a tower in a church, especially in one dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, since in the Song of Songs, it is symbolic both of Her and the Church. Turenne, when he was converted to Catholicism, became a devotee of the Virgin: *turris eburnea*. There could be no fitter symbol for a general than a tower surrounded by palm trees and bucklers. The tower of David naturally led one to think of a king, and it was the King who had ordered the funeral ceremony. When carried to such lengths, symbolism becomes merely a riddle. Compared with the display staged in honour of Séguier or with the awareness and ingenuity that marked all Italian work, this mausoleum for Turenne shows such lamentable clumsiness that it threatened to bring the whole art into disrepute.

By the time the Queen died in 1683, Bérain and Father Ménestrier were no longer in agreement. Bérain's catafalque was in the form of an urn, supported by draped figures and surrounded with candelabra. A dais was suspended from the vaulting and from it long black draperies flowed down to the *castrum doloris*.<sup>25</sup> Father Ménestrier reproached him for the meagreness of his invention and for numerous 'incongruities'.<sup>26</sup> He himself had other ideas. He would have liked to pile all the silver from Versailles upon a funeral pyre copied from the antique—candelabra, ewers, flambeaux, vases—a glittering array of riches which death had snatched from the Queen, who now lay there reduced to nothing.<sup>27</sup> Father Ménestrier, taking as his text all the errors which he saw in Bérain's work at Notre Dame, immediately published his treatise *Décorations funèbres*. Here he tried to demonstrate that such decorations were part of the philosophy of imagery, and should therefore not be entrusted to any but the experienced and intelligent. Vast vistas lay ahead. 'One may also erect temples, pyramids, altars, trophies, or lay out a camp, a palace, a theatre, a road, a gallery and make them temples of Glory, Piety or the Triumphant Virtues—the camp for Victory: the theatre for Sorrow: the palace for Honour: the road of immortality for heroes, like the Milky Way in the skies: altars for sacrifices and perfumes, etc, etc.'<sup>28</sup> He was not unaware that something more simple might be preferred. 'There are those who are content to put a crucifix and six great candlesticks upon the altar. This decoration has some-



thing indefinably more solemn than the use of a great number of candles and lights.'

But, above all, he called on France to make an effort in the field of funereal display. 'The arts flourish amongst us. Good taste has been introduced in painting, sculpture and architecture. Our language has reached perfection. Our theatre is more serious, weighty and more polished than that of any other nation. Our music need no longer be envious of that of Italy . . . From every quarter people come to France to admire its wonders . . . It must not be that funeral decorations are the only thing not carried out by us with the same intelligence which one sees in everything else. We could, if we wished, not only be as successful in this as the Italians, but much surpass them, for we have the most magnificent Prince who ever was and workmen more excellent than can be found in Italy.' If Father Ménestrier was right in his appreciation of the progress made in France during the last thirty years, he was also not entirely wrong in his criticism. But it was he himself who had, by confounding pedantry and preciousness with allegory and symbolism, been unable to give French funeral decoration any quality comparable to the Italian Baroque: nor had anything surpassed Le Brun's masterpiece.

In the rivalry between the two, Bérain remained ahead. One can imagine Father Ménestrier saying 'One must have ingenuity' and Bérain replying 'One must have taste.' And certainly the taste with which he carried out the decorations for Condé's funeral showed that he had no need of complex symbolism to achieve an impression of grandeur [105].<sup>29</sup>

The problems which he now faced bore some resemblance to those which Bernini had solved, fifty years earlier, in designing the baldacchino for St Peter's. Here too, was a baldacchino on the *castrum doloris*. The immense straight pillars, with their Corinthian capitals, were wreathed in laurels. Above the entablature there arose another structure, stepped back. At the four corners were vases, modelled on the antique, which belched flames. The centre was taken up by an urn of great elegance which supported a second, and more slender urn. On top was the traditional figure of Immortality; its wings were ruffled by a breeze, and, as was customary, it held up the portrait of the Prince to view. Thus the design above the baldacchino formed a pyramid. At the corners of the catafalque were symbolic figures, and beneath the baldacchino lay the draped coffin, covered with an immense cushion on which lay a prince's crown. At the foot there was a trophy of equally enormous size.

Between the entablature and the coffin was a pall of perfect proportions, and a second pall, suspended from the vaulting covered the *castrum doloris*, forming a link with the general decoration of the nave, where pictures held up by mummified skeletons, commemorative medals and palms alternated against the black drapes that covered its whole length.

It was in these surroundings that Bossuet delivered his famous funeral oration, that still enthralls us with its eloquence and grandeur of inspira-

150 tion. But it is now nothing more than a masterpiece of rhetoric. At the time, in this setting, it was something living. The great preacher could point to the decorations to underline each point of his address, and his eloquence echoed the inscriptions or recalled the symbolism of the figures displayed in the church. We must remember this if we are to enjoy to the full this passage:

‘Cast your eyes around you: here is everything that piety and magnificence could do to honour a hero: titles, inscriptions, vain marks of that which is no more; figures who seem to weep around a tomb and frail representations of a grief which Time will carry away with everything else; pillars which seem to wish to carry magnificent witness to the dead up to the Heavens; nothing is lacking in all these honours but him to whom they are paid.’

If, in considering the rivalry between the Baroque and Classicism, one thinks that every manifestation of one style means a repudiation of the other, then the whole question becomes pointless. In this case, for instance, you can see pathetic grandeur, the religious sense of power and glory, expressed with a felicity exactly suited to the contemporary background of the Grand Monarchy. It was, paradoxically enough, when one tried to introduce too rigid rules and too subtle refinement that this type of art fell into bathos, having nothing in common with Baroque and merely reflecting its excesses and deformities. Bérain, who had been brought up in a school which rated taste and empiricism as major virtues, found a full outlet for his inclinations and ingenuity in such works. His achievement was classical, if by that we understand that the means were perfectly suited to the end; but it was neither a cold nor intellectual Classicism. Bérain, considered as a decorator, had an outstanding gift for elegance of line and this gave his works their originality. They had too an architectural quality and the spectator was not only enchanted by incidental detail, but by the disposition of mass and volume; nor was an excess of symbolism allowed to detract from the solemn emotion evoked by the composition as a whole.

Yet any style which is constantly in use can scarcely escape the danger of becoming academic. In the beginning these funeral decorations combined religious meditation on death and judgment with the secular wish to pay the last respects to the glorious dead. In Baroque Italy and under the Great Monarchy in France, there were artists who achieved beautiful results in this genre and made full use of a liturgy that could be understood by the people, whose participation and appreciation of the genuine grandeur of these ceremonies were essential to their success. When Bérain's reign in France came to an end, he was succeeded by Slodtz, who continued the tradition. We find many of those curved lines which were so favoured by the Baroque style, and some ingenious, rather capricious essays in the manner of Bérain, where scintillating figures of Fame flying above the



catafalque contrast with sedate groups of figures but are, on the whole, the most successful elements of the composition.<sup>30</sup>

When we come to the eighteenth century a certain petrification can be felt creeping in, and the theatrical aspects seem not only to have lost touch with religious sentiment, but threaten to stifle it. Yet funeral ceremonies die hard, and when the great symbolic displays fell into desuetude the use of palls, candles and plumes survived, and survive today: a frozen conventionality that is a sad, dim reflection of the great Baroque masterpieces.

The reredos was not an innovation of the Counter-Reformation. As the Middle Ages drew to a close there was a widespread taste for decorating altars with gilded and carved panels, or pictures of Christ, the Virgin, the saints or scenes from the Bible. But the new upsurge of Catholicism led to such a flood of reredoses in nearly every country that one is justified in looking upon them as a distinctive and most original characteristic of the Baroque. Every altar became a building in its own right within the church—almost a small temple which was more likely to found its own particular cult than add to the general solemnity of the church. The statues of saints which were placed in the niches of the reredoses brought a new element into divine service: a cult of images that sometimes seems to evoke the presence of the saints themselves. The wealth of columns and designs made the altar a highly decorative feature, and the impression was heightened by the lighted candles and display of flowers when a service was being celebrated.

It soon came to the point that if there was a statue that was the object of particular devotion, the reredos was formed as an immense frame round it, or nearly enclosed it as though in a reliquary. In parish churches hardly a new side chapel was founded without its reredos. Yet one wonders if these magnificent pieces of decoration were not, in a great many cases, really a cheap way out. The addition of a reredos could quite transform the appearance of a church, and give it a 'new look' without the expense of rebuilding, for it was not only the high altars that were embellished, but also those in the side chapels; an altar and reredos might, on the other hand, be placed against the pillars of the nave. The main reredos was naturally the most imposing and often consisted of a central motif flanked by wings. A simpler style, with less ornate decoration and probably only two or three statues was usual for the other altars.<sup>31</sup>

Needless to say, the new churches followed the taste of the day and welcomed this taste for the reredos. It was when an old church was in question that problems arose and the designers had to exert all their ingenuity to adopt a modern reredos to an ancient setting. If a reredos was to be placed in the choir or apse it must be adapted to the architecture and this necessity often added to the mobility of the design: when for instance it resembled a screen with its wings folded back, it accidentally achieved

the effect of contrast which was so much sought after by Baroque artists.

Sometimes if the choir ended in a flamboyant stained-glass window, this would be incorporated in the design for the reredos and the filtered light used to pick out the lines of the cornice of the ornamental garlands.<sup>32</sup> We find, indeed, the utmost variety of form employed by the builders; nor were they hindered by the objections raised by some contemporary theorists that the reredos might make it impossible to carry out certain rites, such as censuring round the altar.<sup>33</sup> It was indeed true that, if there were a reredos, the altar slab had to be against the wall; another disadvantage was that, by its very elaboration, it tended to overwhelm the rites which were celebrated in front of the altar. We must however try to enter into the spirit of the age and understand that the building of reredoses responded to the ostentation of a religion which sought to give the greatest brilliance and solemnity to all its ceremonies and to erect, as it were, a triumphal arch over every altar. Certainly reredoses were built throughout the Catholic world; some of them were crudely carved by the local mason or designed by unknown artists, and some executed by the greatest artists of the time. They may have been constructed of wood, marble stone or stucco, but painting played an essential part. Most often a picture was the centre-piece of the reredos and the rest of the composition was designed round it to set it off or recapitulate the subject. When the white stone contrasted with the sombre or brilliant colour of marble columns, this could give some beautiful effects, but at other times, especially when country artists were employed, the polychromy is so intense that it verges on the ridiculous: the statues are painted, blue or green urns shoot forth scarlet flames, and baskets of fruit or flowers are picked out in violent colours.

Our forefathers put much thought and feeling into these reredoses and if one wishes to study the religious feelings and taste of several generations, they constitute a mass of evidence that has been unduly neglected. Here one can only touch on the subject to point out how they were historically important for diffusing a certain type of feeling and thought and, by comparing some French examples to show the development of taste during the seventeenth century.

M. Hautecoeur has very wisely observed that a reredos was always a means of instructing or edifying the congregation.<sup>34</sup> The choice of theme was never haphazard; in most contracts the artist was told which saints were to be portrayed, and sometimes it was even stipulated what expression they should have. The details of the decoration had a symbolic significance, and the whole work might be a little treatise in religious history or doctrine.<sup>35</sup> The preacher's words, the lessons contained in devotional or theological books, or the chants of the canticles were made visible to the faithful in the decorations of the reredos. Here, when there has not been some scandalous effort to restore or rebuild,<sup>36</sup> the iconography reflects very faithfully the religion of the Counter-Reformation, both in its main trends and local adaptations. One need hardly say that the various orders—



Franciscans, Carmelites, Benedictines, Dominicans or Mendicants—took the opportunity of displaying their own saints.<sup>37</sup> But the lay orders also played a part. If a statue was erected of St Louis or St Elizabeth of Hungary it might not be merely a memorial to a royal saint, but such statues, even in a parish church, might have something to remind the worshipper that here also there was some connexion with the Franciscan Order.

By and large, however, we may say that the iconography of the reredos served as a commentary on the main religious dogmas: the Trinity, which was recalled by the use of triangles in the decoration in cases where the actual presentation of The Father, Son and Holy Ghost was omitted. Other favourite themes were the Redemption, which gave the artist scope to depict the life of Christ from His birth to His passion, the Eucharist, Our Lord's Ascension, or the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Blessed Virgin was indeed paid the highest honours in this new cult of saints and images. A scene of the Annunciation or of the Assumption might be the main feature of a reredos which had been planned in honour of some saint—perhaps of Peter and Paul, founders of the Church, or the two Johns, the Baptist and the Evangelist, St Sebastian, who was martyred, or St Etienne who was a priest.

One finds St Augustine, who had been venerated throughout the Middle Ages, cheek by jowl with St Carlo Borromeo, one of the great figures of the Counter-Reformation.

The Council of Trent had ruled, most definitely, that the authenticity of relics displayed should be established, and that the saints honoured on the altars of a church should be Christian and not semi-pagan figures from the past. This did not greatly influence the piety of the common people who considered that luck might be brought by sticking in pins or touching a holy statue. Superstition was still rife, and it would not have been wise or tactful of the Church to banish local saints who had their own following. This had perhaps a more profound reason. The Baroque has often been reproached for seeking for something startling or rich; so much so, that it rarely presented scenes except of Paradise, and lost touch with everyday life and the hardships which had to be borne by the ordinary man. This contrasted strongly with the work of the Gothic sculptors who had portrayed in detail the changing seasons through representations of the humble tasks and daily life of the peasants. Then pillars were crowned with capitals, or porches ornamented, with scenes of peasants pruning their vines, ploughing, sowing, or going out with their scythes to reap the harvest. Or there might be a smith at his forge or a weaver at his loom. The artist's approach was quite different. In the Middle Ages the artist was a realist and interested in concrete facts. In the Counter-Reformation the artist only wished to display the glories of Heaven for the faithful, or, if he had to surround an altar with a reredos, the figures would be confined to the elect, and were of saints or angels. One must take care, however, not to interpret this wrongly or superficially, and ignore the piety which inspired these

works. Were not the saints, to whom the faithful prayed and whom they represented primarily as intercessors, exceptional beings whose virtue had been proved by martyrdom in the ancient persecutions or who had been granted the mystic's vision of God? It is scarcely credible that the Church would have chosen to propagate the Faith by an art that was unpopular: indeed the piety of the Baroque artists shows considerable wisdom. The reredoses themselves prove it, for here celestial glory is shown side by side with examples of humble and everyday virtues displayed by the saints. This is perhaps more apparent in country churches than in the great cities, but if one examines the choice of saints it is obvious that many have been chosen because they are patron saints of a trade and would therefore appeal to many people. There is, for example, the case of St Isidore, which G. Schreiber has called attention to.<sup>38</sup>

St Isidore, a Castillian peasant, lived in the twelfth century and died in 1130. He was canonized in the seventeenth century and the Church in 1622 ordained that 15th May should be his feast day. In a predominantly peasant society this farm labourer could not fail to attract a large following. His feast day fell on a date when spring was at its height, but when the fate of the harvest was still a matter of hope or fear. To a countryman this saint had lived, like them, on the land, and was someone who could understand their prayers. He might protect their crops in the last decisive weeks before reaping began.

His cult spread far beyond his native land into most remote country districts and he was probably most venerated in the Tyrol. In France one finds his statue on reredoses in the west; there is a fine one at Bouin (Vendée) and another at Lanouée (Morbihan). More surprising perhaps is to find a seventeenth century picture of him still preserved in a church which was only rebuilt during the last century, or to discover that a plaster figure has quite recently been ordered from the workshops of St Sulpice. That was for an old church, but one wonders if a local cult does not still survive—perhaps there had once been a reredos, no longer existing, that had displayed a picture or statue of St Isidore.<sup>39</sup>

Sometimes the choice of a patron saint seems most surprising and there exists no apparent reason for selecting him. One wonders why St Xavier, who had evangelized Japan and the Indies, and was canonized for this in 1622, had any connexion with making crops grow or helping the peasants in their labours. It only becomes understandable when we realize that the Jesuits, especially those who were missionaries amongst the peasants of Central Europe, suggested that one of their own saints might intervene for them. He had braved tempests and peril by water in his travels, and was surely thus entitled to protect them from storm or bless their crops by gentle rain. In southern Germany he was a favourite saint of pilgrims. If their cattle were struck down by an epidemic, the peasants would flock to statues of him so that the water they brought back would be blessed and when sprinkled round their cowsheds would stop the plague. Even the



Protestant peasants did not always despise the curative powers of Xavier water (*Xavierus Wasser*).<sup>40</sup>

The devotion shown to St Joseph was not only paid him because he had shielded Our Lord in His infancy, which was a popular theme of the Counter-Reformation. He became a symbol of the small-scale artisan whose son, either as an apprentice or partner, helped him in the workshop.

A sculptor from Angers called Barauderie (1643?-1729) was commissioned to carve a statue for the church in Allençon showing St Joseph teaching the child Jesus carpentry.<sup>41</sup> The same sculptor signed in 1694 a contract with the Prior of Fontaine-Couverte, who was a dependant of the Abbé of La-Röe (near Craon, in fact Mayenne), to erect a reredos for the altar in the south transept, and a bas-relief of the Nativity to take the place of the usual picture. It was, in fact, an *Adoration of the Shepherds*, carved in white stone, and painted [108 & 109]. One of the shepherds brings a goose, another comes with a cage of turtle doves and a sheep to give in offering to the Holy Child. They are typical of the peasants of the district and might be carrying their tithes to the abbot or prior. The high relief of the gilded drapery and the angels' wings which form the corners of the design may be Italian Baroque, but the scene itself recaptures the feeling of the Middle Ages and, without any false naïveté, manages to introduce these simple rural customs into the scene of the Nativity.

The list could be extended indefinitely, but the examples already given are enough to show that the saints depicted on a reredos might play an important part in popular religious life, forming a link between the services of the church and the everyday life of the people.

The iconography of the reredos was also used to spread and underline what one might call sacramental ideas. They were not so much directly religious but indirectly gained veneration from the solemnity of their setting. One theme was the ideal of the family and another, though much rarer, was that of the monarchy. The Catholic Reformation did much to encourage the honours paid to the Holy Family—St Joseph, the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Infant—but often this was curiously elaborated in the decoration of the reredos. Figures of God the Father and the Holy Ghost were placed above the Virgin and Christ, and images of St Anne and of St John the Baptist were brought in: a whole genealogical ramification—it might have been a New Testament Tree of Jesse—and without any doubt the principle of the family was bound up with the homage paid to the Holy Family.<sup>42</sup>

One can say the same about the idea of monarchy. Kings who had won their place on the altars served, by spreading the cult of royal saints, to increase the respect of the institution itself. Foremost was St Louis, and then St Henri, St Ferdinand and St Elizabeth of Hungary, whose close ties with the Franciscan order gave them a wider range than other royal saints: St Wenceslas or St Guy were little known outside Bohemia. There was also the custom, which had come down from the Middle Ages, of using

royal features to portray a saint, and we find Anne of Austria as a model for a saintly queen and often Louis XIII for St Louis.<sup>43</sup> Again kings might be remembered, not on the altar itself but in the decoration of the reredos—e.g. portraits of Henri IV, Louis XIII and Louis XIV as a young man adorn the reredos at Sargé (Sarthe). At Bourg de Batz (Loire-Atlantique) there are two sculptured medallions, showing Louis XIV and Maria Theresa in profile on the curiously turned panels which flank this reredos.

It would be absurd to credit these figures with a direct or too great an influence on contemporary feeling: questions of dues and seignorial rights were the matters that aroused most passion and affected people's behaviour. But if one dismisses them as quite negligible we fall into another error, for the Baroque reredos had as great an emotional effect as any medieval sculpture.

One may well ask if this particular aspect of French art should best be looked on as classical or Baroque. Yet the question raises a wrong or at least a specious problem. Probably in no other province of art is it more difficult to find a common basis for what the artist thought fit and what his public expected. No doubt the intention was on both sides to decorate a sanctuary, make the service more impressive and pay homage to the various saints. But, once that has been said, it is extraordinary what differences one finds. Nor does the question of date play an important part. The timelag between the towns and the provincial countryside was so great that in Brittany you can find Renaissance decorative motifs being used up to the eighteenth century.

Two facts are, nevertheless, worth remembering: the building of reredoses was as it were in full flood during the whole of the seventeenth century and the spate of commissions began to recede just when the spirit embodied in the Academy of Architecture was beginning to spread throughout France.

Often enough the reredos looks like a building in its own right, but its architectural qualities never strike us as much as its use as pure decoration. It was expected to have a wealth of ornament and a profusion of symbolism and to introduce into a chapel a spectacular, rather theatrical element.

Often the whole reredos depicts or comments on one scene, either by juxtaposition of different aspects of some definite happening, or by several successive scenes from a story. If the main picture were a large picture of the Resurrection or the Assumption of the Virgin, it might be framed by figures carved in wood or stone; on the pediment above, a bas-relief would present others, who showed by their gestures also their amazement and awe at the miracle and invited the faithful to join with them.

At l'Isle sur Sorgue (Vaucluse) a superb—and a very Baroque—reredos has as a centrepiece a large picture of the Assumption [106 & 107]. It is framed by twisted pillars and crowned by a fine design of volutes and a



triangular pediment. From the volutes two angels, in relief, bend down and appear dazzled by what they behold. Above the pediment there are more carved figures—two kneeling angels who venerate the Blessed Virgin, now in Heaven and surrounded by a cloud.

At Bouin (Vendée) the main picture is of the Baptism of Christ: Jesus, John the Baptist, and the Dove of the Holy Ghost with wings outspread. But in the upper part of the reredos, which is polychrome and carved, God the Father leans out from a great circular medallion depicting 'A voice from Heaven: this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'<sup>44</sup> In both cases it is impossible to divorce the sculpture from the painting; they are complementary and would lose half their significance by themselves. There is another equally dramatic reredos to be seen just outside Angers in a private chapel which has long been called 'Les Saints de la Barre.' Here the sculptor Pierre Biardeau has chosen the well-known theme of the Infant Jesus playing with the Instruments of the Passion. They are presented to him by angels; the Blessed Virgin is frightened and turns away as if seeking help. Above is a figure of God the Father. At the sides St James and St John stand calm and reassuring.

There are innumerable other examples we could quote. On the whole the reredos is, indeed, Baroque, but it is difficult to determine whether these artists were inspired by the Italian or by the Flemish taste for popular display. In France several traditions are seen side by side during the seventeenth century.

Some fine examples in triptych form, with the central portion raised, though all three boast superimposed orders, a generous display of flowers and garlands and crowned with large pediments—triangular, curved, or broken—echo the reredoses and church porches which we find in Flanders. Then the Fontainebleau Renaissance style has still a strong following: we come across the straight marble pillars ornamented profusely with foliage, caryatids in the form of Termes, shell-like niches, candelabras and arabesques. Also there are those graceful elongated angels with their curled locks, clothed so that the drapery gracefully discloses a leg, which are so unlike the angels conceived either by Bernini or Borromini. Unless there is some documentation to guide us it is difficult to give any precise date for these; as M. Hautecoeur remarks, one might attribute a reredos built under Louis XIV to a contemporary of Henri IV. The reredos at Guérande, which is definitely dated 1650, resembles a work of the Renaissance, yet has also something in common with another reredos, even later (1660-65) which was executed by the Angevin artist Gaspard Robelot at Saint-Jean-de-Béré, and is one of the most beautiful in the Châteaubriant region [110]. It stands in the semi-domed choir of an ancient Romanesque church and is built up in three parts. The pilasters, the red and black marble columns and the niches for statues add to the rhythm. White stonework is carved into a tangle of garlands, volutes, putti, and terminal caryatids, with contrast given by inlays of dark marble in the form of urns.

Everywhere twisted columns are used freely; but it would be childish to attribute these to the influence of Bernini's baldacchino at St Peter's, for as we have seen, the tradition goes back much farther. This particular type of decoration seems to have had a great attraction for rustic craftsmen, who revert to it constantly, enriching it with vines trailing up and, amongst the bunches of grapes and tendrils, introducing figures of Christ and of the Eucharist. One imagines that the clergy who commissioned or inspired these reredoses favoured this motif as being an easily understood piece of symbolism.

Quite early on in the seventeenth century a more precise doctrine of what a reredos should be spread through France in 1633 when J. Barbet published *Livre d'architecture d'autels et de cheminées*. It was dedicated to Cardinal Richelieu, and was a collection of plates engraved by Abraham Bosse. As Félibien testifies in his *Idée du peintre parfait*, the influence of such books of engravings in forming taste and imposing rules was immense, since the fashion for them did not abate for the next twenty years. They poured out from the presses of the Rue Saint-Jacques, and the publishers never stopped recommending them to a public which included the provinces.

Jean Le Paultre, with great fertility of imagination, turned out plan after plan for altars in the Roman style, for reredoses, and baldacchinos.<sup>45</sup> No one could deny that, with their rich ornamentation and dramatic qualities, they were Baroque. Great figures of angels framed or supported the central picture, and pointed out the tabernacle and the painting with vivid gestures while, above, cherubs would affectedly hold aloft a cross which was the apex of this miniature building.<sup>46</sup> But gradually the use of straight columns increased and monumental and architectural effects became more popular. While elaborate decoration never disappeared from the reredos, it took second place to the design as a whole. About 1690 the usual characteristics were simple majestic columns crowned by capitals, a frieze architrave, and triangular pediment. The shafts of the columns were still, as a rule, entwined by garlands. The figures, no longer in flowing robes, had a more sedate charm. The liveliness of Baroque was being replaced, not by simplicity, which no one wished for, but by the grave serenity of Classic art. You may see it in the beautiful reredos with Corinthian columns, which was put up by Jean Boffrand in the Jesuit church at Vannes in 1685.

This was a period when there was less and less demand for reredoses in France,<sup>47</sup> though elsewhere, in Italy, southern Germany and along the valley of the Danube, they became increasingly popular. But it was certainly not here—neither in Flanders, France nor in Central Europe—that the reredos, as an expression of Baroque, reached its fullest development. From the last years of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century, the reredos gave new inspiration to Spanish architects and Baroque flourished once more. Previously it had been used to express the



tragic and almost savage genius of the country; now the complicated lines and forms seemed to sing a fantastic paean of gaiety.

The altars themselves were nearly overwhelmed by these magnificent compositions which often took up every inch of the choir with lace-like decoration of carved and painted woodwork, and which surrounded the niches of saints, so delicately portrayed that were they seen without that background, they might be rather insipid. Respect for architectural values was not lacking—there was a logic in the placing of the various panels, although the shafts of the columns almost disappear under a wealth of medallions and decoration; even a garland of flowers may be crowned by a capital. This churrigueresque style, which was created by the builders of the reredoses and by church decorators, began in Salamanca, and some have held that its initial inspiration is bound up with the writings of Góngora and the passionate predilection of the University for elaborate and subtle argument.

Thirty or forty years later this style swept all before it in another province: Andalusia. One cannot ignore the reredos at Umbrete, near Seville. It was built by Pedro Duque Cornejo in 1733 and its decoration achieves a remarkable intensity.<sup>48</sup> The rhythm which runs through the whole work and the careful division into panels forbid us to speak of disorder, but the virtuosity is quite bewildering. A Frenchman or an Italian would have been too thoroughly grounded on antique models or classical doctrine ever to have dared do such a thing. Latin America, on the contrary, adopted the style without hesitation [VIII].

In the seventeenth century France never really took sides in the struggle, or rather the competition between a view of life which thought that the world was reasonable and therefore led to a classical outlook (the doctrines and rules propounded by the classical school were as much a confession of faith as a method of control) and the belief that imagination should reign and choose what decoration it liked. Werner Weisbach has spoken of its Janus' face: 'ein doppeltes Gesicht', and others speak of a Classicism with a Baroque tinge.<sup>49</sup> This variation can be understood easily enough when one considers the variety of backgrounds, ambitions, and taste which are characteristic of any large society. France was susceptible to both Italian and Spanish influences, for these Mediterranean countries had been the first to profit from the new economic revolution and, in consequence, the first to challenge traditional values. But by this time French society itself had developed in so many directions that it could not but add something new to what it had taken over. During the seventeenth century there is the great flowering of literature; the rise of great fortunes which could be spent in commissions for buildings, sculptures or paintings, and Versailles, which seemed justly to reflect the glory of the King, and the power of the kingdom. All these contributed something to the formation of a purely French style. It was a style in which grandeur was allied with moderation,

160 jubilation was restrained by taste, and one which eventually became a classical model to be copied—a true successor of the Renaissance, Greece and Rome.

The Classic style had conquered, yet however richly variegated it might be, it could not express everything. France still maintained values that might be called Baroque and this is, surely, a witness of her vitality.





# BOOK III







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## CHAPTER VIII

# *England*

WHEN we turn to England and ask whether it welcomed or rejected the taste for Italian Baroque, we find a curious background. In the seventeenth century, which was above all the century of the Church and the monarchy, the throne had twice to face revolt, and a king had been publicly executed. Economically the great expansion and power that had begun under Elizabeth continued.

The question is not easy to answer because of the complexities and contradictory interests in English society at the beginning of the century, and even more so because England, even when she might adopt the prevalent ideas or tastes of the age, gave them a characteristic twist.

In recent years we have seen the 'discovery' of English Baroque, and British historians have published studies of it which are usually learned, intelligent and balanced.<sup>1</sup> On the Continent one is often tempted to think that there has been a misuse of terms and that a fashionable label has been stuck on to works which are much more often classical; or at least, one's first impression of them is that they differ so greatly from the Baroque creations of Italy and Germany that any idea of a common origin or, indeed, of any affinity is untenable. Let us get rid of this inherited prejudice, and, when we have discarded it, try not to fall into the opposite error of thinking that the new explanation is the only valid one.

Was the Renaissance of Tudor times followed by a Stuart Baroque or by the classical style of the eighteenth century under the Hanoverians? The facts are more complicated and more dramatic. How could it be otherwise in a country whose prosperity was increasing rapidly due to the expansion of its commercial activity and the revival of its internal economy? Added to this there was a prolonged religious crisis, when England hesitated between various expressions of the Reformation in her search for what would best suit her needs. Many solutions were tried; each found favour in the eyes of one or another government, but none commanded enough support from a deeply divided public to be accepted unreservedly by more than one particular group.

The traditional picture of England at that time is well enough known: a mercantile nation which was now sending out its fleets on every ocean of the world, since the old maritime routes over the North Sea, the Baltic and

the White Sea no longer sufficed; an England that rivalled Portugal and Spain and began to colonize the New World to the north of the Spanish Empire; a country on the threshold of an economic domination that was to last for two hundred years. This was an England, in fact, which already showed signs of what her future was to be: a country which, by breaking the pretensions of absolute monarchy, had founded the basis of political freedom and set an example to the rest of Europe. But this is an abstract picture, prejudiced, and influenced by our knowledge of subsequent developments. One could just as easily, if not more justifiably, talk of an England isolating herself from the Continent and owing what little she did know of Europe principally to her contacts with her nearest neighbours—France, the Netherlands, or Germany. England was royalist, and the King did not lack support when he set out to affirm his prerogatives. And England was still largely feudal with a population that was predominantly rural, where the enclosure of common land was aimed not so much at increasing the size of the market for farm products as the immediate improvement of the land enclosed: better crops, cattle and milk and an easier life for the farmer. The open field system was broken down in the interests of the individual producer. England, in short, in spite of changes, remained medieval, for even while these changes were going on there was a wish to keep the spirit of ancient times alive in English manners and institutions. People felt that these traditions incorporated a living truth which it was wise to preserve.

In the great brick buildings of Tudor times we see the hall lit by great windows, and the façade still retaining turrets of an older design, a compromise between the traditional and the new forms of the Renaissance which had been until now known only in French or Dutch models. This was the England of the first two courtyards at Hampton Court, a strong and stubborn England. It changed, and very considerably so, from one decade to the next, and presently (if we can use this jaded word in its seventeenth century sense) astonished Europe by its daring innovations. Nevertheless England obstinately preserved a native caution which served as a breakwater: when waves of new ideas or taste came rolling in from abroad they reached the shores of England gently, though they brought the seeds of something hitherto unknown which were to grow into a new culture.

Curiosity about these new trends was first aroused in aristocratic circles. The great career of Inigo Jones (1573-1652)<sup>2</sup> was due to the fact that the Earl of Arundel was a connoisseur of the arts. When he discovered that the son of a London draper was exceptionally talented as a designer, he decided to send him to study in Italy. Inigo Jones was therefore able to spend some considerable time in Venice, assimilating the masterpieces of Sansovino and Palladio, and seeing the latest buildings being put up by Scamozzi. He was also a fanatical theatre-goer at a time when the Venetian actors excelled. On his way back Inigo Jones visited Denmark, where Christian IV asked him to draw up plans for the palaces of Rosenborg and Friedriksborg. He



then continued his journey to London in the entourage of Princess Anne, who was to marry James I. Later on he paid a second visit to Italy, and also studied in France. Then, when he finally settled down in his own country, he took up duties as architect to the Queen and the Prince of Wales.

Though his work as a decorator and producer of court masques was Baroque, as an architect Inigo Jones introduced Palladianism to England, which with its pure straight lines and harmonious proportions, founded a durable, if not continuous tradition. It was due to him that Palladianism came straight to London from Venice, without any contamination of either local or foreign influences, indeed, one might almost say without modification or change of any kind.<sup>3</sup> The summer residence which Queen Anne wished to build on the banks of the Thames and which was actually finished under another Queen, Henrietta Maria, might well have been one of those villas built by Palladio on the mainland near Venice or in the neighbourhood of Vicenza. Today it is seen against the majestic buildings of Greenwich Hospital, but contrasts with them in its restrained proportions, the quality of its forms, the absence of all striving for effect, that refined elegance which appears so simple but is only achieved by the utmost skill [113]. One feels the same artistic quality in the façade of the Queen's Chapel, Marlborough House with its accent on the great window with two porticoes and the central pane arched, which evokes the fine compositions of straight lines and arcs, going back to the pure models of antiquity, which Alberti was the first to employ.

During these years Inigo Jones was busy rebuilding the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall [114].<sup>4</sup> The pilasters of the side bays throw up the slightly projecting central portion where three bays are more richly decorated by attached columns with well-defined capitals. Above is a frieze ornamented with garlands, and the whole is crowned by a balustrade. This intense feeling for decoration is seen also on the ground floor, where the pediments of the windows are alternatively triangular and segmental, introducing a rhythm in nice contrast to the cornice of the first storey, and an elaboration which one would not find in a purely classical building. Yet that is an essentially Palladian characteristic, and one can understand how some art historians have classed Palladio, who showed himself so rigid a doctrinaire in his *Four Books on Architecture*, amongst the Mannerists. There is no need to be casuistical about these terms and deny that Inigo Jones was classical. Later on, in an England that had adopted a certain amount of Baroque, we find critics invoking him and preaching a return to his style as an alternative to the new trends.<sup>5</sup> More especially the western façade built for St Paul's, the piazza of Covent Garden, and even the general plan for the palace of Whitehall, all show by the use of columns for the porticoes, the care for proportion and the proper use of the orders—for example, the pyramids and volutes in his designs—a style that was directly based on the Italian Renaissance. But it was not the Italy of Rome or Florence that he

reflected, but that of Venice. Whether he were planning a work in the Grand Manner or designing a small palace he would recommend his aristocratic patrons something which had found favour with the wealthy patricians of the Serene Republic. The designs for masques for which he became so famous show a Venetian influence, just as we can detect echoes of Venetian music in the work of Purcell.

Under the early Stuarts other characteristics closely allied to Baroque suddenly blossomed forth in England. Both sovereigns attached the highest importance to the royal power, and James I wished to force every subject to acknowledge his Divine Right. Because of that he detested Rome, whose pretensions to authority might prove a counter-balance to his own; but the Anglican Church he considered to be bound up with the monarchy — 'No bishops, no king' he said. Those who moved in the royal circle took the Italian courtier as a model.<sup>6</sup> Their lives were to be surrounded by luxury, but they did not call upon the English to furnish it. They preferred to import works of art from abroad and ask expert advice on choosing them. It was very like what had happened, a hundred years earlier, in France under François I or under Rudolph II more recently in Prague. The English became collectors. They were certainly eclectic: Flemish, Dutch, and German artists seemed to please them no less than the Italians, though on the whole Italian works were preferred.

Two personalities stand out as great connoisseurs. The foremost was Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. He possessed an innate appreciation of beautiful things and a discernment which was refined and confirmed by studying the old masters. He was also keenly interested in helping any artistic talent he came across by his patronage: without him, indeed, the development of the arts in England would have been lamentably different.

Then there was Buckingham, who amassed a collection that rivalled that of the Earl of Arundel. As a political figure he will always be remembered in English history; his audacity, his fevered lust for power and honours reminds one of his contemporary, Wallenstein, who was a truly Baroque figure.

There is a third name which should be added to these: the second son of James I who became Prince of Wales upon the death of his brother Henry, and eventually succeeded to the throne in 1625 as Charles I. Like his brother he had been brought up to appreciate the arts and was equally responsive to them. Then, as Prince of Wales, he went on a voyage to Spain for his betrothal to the Infanta. The projected marriage fell through, but this journey gave him an opportunity to see the Spanish collections and to develop and enrich his own culture.

When he became king he used his ambassadors as agents to buy works of art, especially Sir Henry Wotton in Venice, who was himself a distinguished dilettante, and Fielding, 2nd Earl of Denbigh, a patron of music to whom Manelli and Ferrari had dedicated their books of cantatas. In 1628 when the Duke of Mantua was forced to sell the magnificent





V Pozzo extended the architecture of the church of Sant Ignazio by an optical illusion. This seems to enlarge the nave under a sky of dazzling light, in which St Ignatius is pierced to the heart by a ray from the heart of God





collection of the Gonzagas, its pictures by Correggio, Raphael, Caravaggio and Titian, and some antique statuary were all shipped over to London.

Under the Commonwealth this collection was sold. Its masterpieces were dispersed and are now scattered round the museums of Europe: the Correggios and *The Death of the Virgin* by Caravaggio are in the Louvre, and *Charles V* by Titian is in Madrid, so that now it is a feat of imagination to realize what a prodigious collection was there to inspire the English artists, and show them the most accomplished technique in the world. The whole collection was not scattered. At Hampton Court one can still see the great cartoons of *Caesar's Triumph* which were painted by Mantegna and his pupils. It is an ode to power, superb artistically, and a work that might well inspire pride and a longing for glory in any prince.

This royal collection was the school where Van Dyck learnt his craft. It must surely have been those sumptuous imperial portraits of Titian that inspired him in his paintings of Charles I [117]. In the Louvre portrait there seems to be an idealization of a great gentleman of the seventeenth century; the physical elegance of a cavalier, the refinement of exquisite courtesy in the gestures, the taste shown in the choice of sober and harmonious dress. In the Buckingham Palace portrait we see the King in armour riding as though in triumph through the stone archway, which is decorated with hanging draperies and coats of arms to heighten the effect.

[The portraits which Van Dyck painted of the royal family and of the great nobles are of great importance if one wishes to recapture the atmosphere of the Stuart court and understand how much it was in sympathy with the new ideas.] In 1629 a diplomatic mission sent to London was headed by Rubens and gave Charles I an opportunity to meet him personally. He asked the artist to decorate the ceiling of the new Banqueting House, and Rubens painted an apotheosis of James I—a vigorous, boisterous and finely coloured work that shows an affinity with the work of Veronese in the Doge's Palace (here we see once again the Venetian influence in England) which is no less a major achievement of Baroque painting [116].

Commissions were given to foreign artists in every field. In this the Queen exercised some considerable influence, nor must it be forgotten that she herself was French. Henrietta Maria was the daughter of Henri IV, who died too early for her to know him, and of Marie de Medici. Her mother's influence upon her was profound and she inherited the Medici passion for innovation, for refashioning all her surroundings, and also took a delight in patronizing innumerable artists. Hubert Le Sueur, who had worked for Henri IV, was summoned from France to London, where he carved statues of the King and Queen and a bust of Charles I in the classical manner.

Bernini, who was still the acknowledged 'king of arts', was also approached. Just after he had received a commission from Paris for a bust of Richelieu he was asked to do one of Charles I.

Bernini, however, could not leave Rome and Van Dyck made some sketches of the King to send to him, full face, in profile and three quarters. The bust was a complete success and Henrietta Maria had a letter sent to Bernini to say how satisfied she was and 'she wished to have a similar bust executed by the same hand' based on the portraits of her which were enclosed with her letter.<sup>7</sup>

Then there was a Dutchman, the charming painter Lely, who came to live in London during the last years of Charles's reign. He began by painting in the manner of Van Dyck, and not till the Restoration did he develop his own style, when he painted the famous series of all the court beauties.

There was also an exiled Czech whom Arundel had brought over from Germany, the great engraver Hollar, who became drawing-master to the young princes. His mastery of line and a profound sensibility for nature made him one of the earliest landscape painters in England and no one has better evoked 'in that elusive poetry of his, the atmosphere of England three hundred years ago' [140].<sup>8</sup> But again his main work was done under the Restoration, though his love for England, which made him return after the Commonwealth, had been born when he first came there under Charles I.

After some hesitation Charles decided that St Paul's should be rebuilt. This great cathedral in the heart of London played an essential part in the life of the citizens, who for the most part ignored it as a church and turned the nave into a place where merchants met to discuss their affairs, or idlers to gossip. But in 1561 it was damaged by fire, the spire fell, and the walls of the nave were badly cracked. A royal gift from Queen Elizabeth, the funds which every diocese had been asked to contribute, and even special taxes imposed for its restoration had not raised enough money to restore it. Charles I looked upon it as a point of honour to carry out what his predecessors had failed to do. Working together with Archbishop Laud, who wished to restore regular services in St Paul's, in 1631 the King reconstituted the committee for the rebuilding and, two years later, appointed Inigo Jones as surveyor.

It was decided that in restoring this medieval church the new additions should be in the Renaissance style. The west front was to be entirely remodelled. There was to be a portico of great Corinthian columns, with a balustrade, supporting the statues of James I and Charles I, which was thrown out in front of the main building where the large bays illuminating the nave were still preserved. The portico itself was drawn together by two large volutes and obelisks placed at each side of the central gables. Inigo Jones himself thought that this western porch of St Paul's was one of the finest things he ever designed. Built up round the central motif of the Corinthian columns, this clever, Italianate and perfectly proportioned portico formed a magnificent approach to St Paul's. It might reflect the royal taste, but the fact that it was in a foreign style and had cost a great deal of



money made the Londoners dislike it so much that Charles I became even more estranged from his people.

The Revolution had already broken out and Charles was almost a prisoner at Hampton Court when his next plans for building took shape. He disliked Whitehall, with its jumble of buildings in various styles. He wished to give it some coherence, enlarge it, and make it one of the most beautiful palaces in Europe.

Inigo Jones and John Webb, who was his assistant and the most devoted of his disciples, prepared a grandiose scheme which would include the Banqueting House.<sup>9</sup> The plans remained true to the Palladian tradition<sup>10</sup> but the vast dimensions seemed rather to express a desire for magnificence than any artistic achievement, and to set forth an ideal of monarchy which could only acerbate the feelings of those who were already in opposition to the King [115]. The fashion for the cosmopolitan, Italian, and often Baroque style was so bound up with court circles that it was rejected by the country as a whole. It had been able to modify the appearance of sites by this or that construction, but it had not yet left any deep impression at all.

Society had changed. Progress in agriculture had assured many landlords, usually of new families, of a respectable fortune, and commerce had created an even larger class of *nouveaux riches*. They wished to build houses, furnish them, and decorate them lavishly, but their taste tended to choose the traditional in preference to anything novel. At Wilton or Coleshill the Italian style might be triumphant, but elsewhere the Elizabethan still goes on, almost as though it were chosen as a deliberate gesture against the new fashion.

On top of that, the Church of England disliked it as smacking of Popery or at least of being contaminated by foreign influences. The old churches which embodied the zealous faith of the Middle Ages seemed to be the only worthy setting for Divine Service, and if new churches had to be built the clergy preferred to copy an ancient model. There was also a strong religious feeling amongst the smaller landowners and some bourgeois circles that was austere puritanical. It condemned any display; to pour out large sums of money seemed to be a defiant gesture against the laws of economy and an insult to the poor.

Thus both the strength of native traditions and the new progressive trends combined against the Baroque in England. She might almost be considered as the pole of resistance to the new intellectual forces which radiated from Italy. But in spite of this, the achievement of a small circle of people remained.

The Revolution was not particularly set upon destroying these things, though by fits and starts it was both iconoclastic and anarchical. The revolutionary leaders were far too much absorbed by the war to have any theories about style. Puritanism is in principle no more opposed to beauty and the arts than is Calvinism, provided they do not in any way represent

what are considered dubious pleasures in an attractive light. Oliver Cromwell had his portrait painted by Robert Walker in a pose that is directly inspired by the picture by Titian of General del Vasto addressing his troops.<sup>11</sup>

Pembroke went on giving instructions to Pratt about the building of his house at Coleshill; for a great number of Englishmen or Scotsmen the whole of the Revolution passed over their heads, leaving everyday life practically unchanged.

Italian art, especially if it were soberly classical, was not condemned by the rebels. But the revolutionaries, by breaking with the court and the aristocracy, cut themselves off from the most cultivated society of the time, which had shown the most enlightened and fruitful interest in the arts. This society was an exclusive and eclectic clique, who felt a deep and not merely fashionable sympathy with the Italian way of life and Italian thought. It inclined to a taste for the Baroque and the artists fell in with their aristocratic patrons' wishes.

After the Civil War many of these left England. Already the Queen and the princes, and many of those they patronized, had fled the country. The intellectuals and the patrons were scattered, but it was not simply the supporters of the monarchy who fled. There were, for instance, two Protestant Czechs who left England for quite different reasons. In the case of Hollar it was almost certainly that he felt bound in loyalty to follow his patrons. But Comenius had other reasons. He had come over to England to propagate a new method of teaching which would, in the long run, lead to peace and unity between all Christians. When he arrived to find his friends split by the Civil War into two irreconcilable camps, he decided that the Revolution was a catastrophe that had wrecked his mission.<sup>12</sup> Many an artist could say the same. There was no longer any talk of completing the palace at Whitehall. It became instead an auction-room for the sale of the royal pictures. No doubt it was unavoidable: the Treasury funds were depleted and had to be replenished. Yet for certain Puritan elements this must have been a joyous occasion, a symbolic act of throwing out of the country the whole sensuous fictional paraphernalia that had led princes astray by pandering to their self-importance or inspiring them to demand absolute obedience.

These English exiles, wandering about the Continent and sometimes reduced to dire poverty, had at least an opportunity of learning at first hand what was happening in France and the Netherlands. During the Revolution and Commonwealth in England, France was also torn by Civil War, and the great art treasures collected by Cardinal Mazarin were in danger. But France was a country that had built much that was new, and there were many art critics from the Richelieu circle who were trying to work out underlying principles—the clique of Sublet, Des Noyers and Fréart. Holland at this time was striving to form an individual style through a synthesis of classical learning and local tradition.

Six years elapsed between the end of the Fronde in France and the Restoration in England. When in 1660 Charles II regained his throne, there was no question of him regaining the powers of absolute monarchy which his father had enjoyed, but there was the opportunity for a new experiment in the art of monarchy and the question was how Charles II would approach it. He did not inherit the fine taste of his father or his liking for grandeur, but he was equally determined to provide a suitable background for himself and also to enhance the prestige of England. The plans for rebuilding Whitehall were reconsidered, but found too expensive; the designs for St Paul's were approved. He was, above all, keenly interested in restoring Windsor Castle, at least to make it habitable and to remodel the staircases and the Chapel Royal. Antonio Verrio was called in to do this. He might well be described as Neapolitan, although he was born and brought up in Lecce, a small town that already had possessed many distinctly Baroque works. It was from there that he went to Naples to work in the studio of Luca Giordano, and later was admitted to the Royal Academy in Paris. His style was to a certain extent Baroque, and no one could have presented the theme of monarchy better than he did. In his work the various elements of the Baroque and classical combine to produce a style that is typical of the England of the Restoration.

John Evelyn had a considerable influence with the artists of the age, since he was a shrewd connoisseur of both Italian and French art. In 1664 he translated a book by Roland Fréart which had been published in Paris fourteen years previously. It was *Le Parallèle de l'architecture antique et moderne*, and Evelyn's translation was a token of his admiration for the neo-classicists. Painters such as Lely or Kneller, who were receiving more and more commissions from court circles, adopted the manner of Mignard and other French masters, though the influence of Van Dyck and the Dutch school still persisted.

The sculptors Stone, Bushnell and Quellin had all been to Italy and had learnt the Baroque style, though Duquesnoy had perhaps as great an influence on them as Bernini. In the moving statue by Bushnell of Charles I the pathos certainly derives from Bernini, and Arnold Quellin's tomb of Thomas Thynne in Westminster is undoubtedly Baroque. One might call the English artists synthetists who were well aware of the richness of work being done on the Continent and selected what they liked or what might fit in with a particular commission.

The key position of Surveyor General of Works, which had been held by Inigo Jones, would have been given, one would have thought, to John Webb, who certainly expected it. But Charles II gave it to Dendham, who was little but a figurehead. He had, however, a young and talented mathematician as his assistant—Christopher Wren. The architect Hugh May, who had built Eltham Lodge in a style showing Dutch influence, was appointed Paymaster. John Webb had already presented the King with a new plan for Greenwich, and the King Charles' block, which was



built between 1663 and 1669, is an important part of the palace; but perhaps it is even more important in bringing Wren to the fore, the man who was to become England's greatest architect.<sup>13</sup>

Christopher Wren was born in 1623 and his background was essentially Church of England; his father was Dean of Windsor and his uncle was a bishop, so that neither by temperament nor family connexions had he any sympathy with the Puritans or the military dictatorship. He himself had no ambitions to become an architect. He was a mathematician, and in its early years a member of the Philosophical Club at Oxford, which was later to develop into the Royal Society and claim Robert Boyle, John Evelyn and Isaac Newton as members. In considering Wren it is most important to remember this. Like Borromini or Guarini he was fascinated by the ideal combination of lines and volume, and being a mathematician he might have become an engineer. Indeed, when Tangier was ceded to England by Portugal as part of the dowry of Queen Catherine, he was asked to inspect the fortifications. It was only later on that the architect in him took precedence over the engineer; but once Wren had decided on his vocation, he was determined not to rely on theory alone, but to travel and see architectural masterpieces for himself.

He decided to go to France, which had again won world-wide renown as an artistic centre, and thence, if possible, to Italy. In the summer of 1665 he arrived in Paris and showed great interest in the buildings of Mansart but even more in the work of Le Vau, especially the centre wing of the Louvre and the château of Vaux-le-Vicomte. By an odd coincidence he met Bernini in Paris. It was apparently a short meeting: it was a day when the great Italian was so suspicious and bad-tempered that Wren was only allowed a few minutes to look at Bernini's designs. Why the 'king of art' should have behaved like this to someone who was, as an architect, a novice, is difficult to understand. It is doubtful whether so brief a meeting could have had a lasting influence on Wren, but of course one cannot be certain. It is certain that he held long talks with French architects, and shared their excitement about the schemes for rebuilding the Louvre and possibly remodelling Paris. Vaux-le-Vicomte, the apartments of the Queen Mother in the Louvre, the Tuileries, the Palais-Royal, the new Beauvais mansion that had just been finished by Lepautre, the Luxembourg, the suburb of Marais and the new churches all enlarged his horizons and had a lasting influence on his outlook. A few months after his return to England he was asked to submit designs for the rebuilding of St Paul's.

Once it had been decided to remodel the cathedral radically, Wren proposed that a rotunda should be built in the centre of this Gothic building and become the dominant feature of the whole, a triumph as it were of Renaissance and classical taste over barbarism. But, before any decision had been reached on this, the Great Fire broke out on the night of 2nd September 1666. It started in a baker's shop in the East End and raged for several days.

Old St Paul's and all the surrounding buildings were burnt down. Eventually it was realized that there was no point in trying to repair the charred and cracked walls, but that an entirely new cathedral would have to be built. Obviously the one sensible thing to do was to make a clean sweep, clear the ruins, and plan a new city round a new cathedral. The space had been almost providentially provided, for no one could ever have attempted to expropriate the old tenants or meet the cost of buying up the houses and land. The reasonable and most attractive design that Wren drew up for rebuilding London, with its logical placing of streets and squares, came to nothing, nor was he even granted as much space as he wished as surroundings for the cathedral. Still, St Paul's, which was building from 1675 to 1712, was at least entirely new and the work of one man, though Wren frequently modified his plans. The church as we see it today is a synthesis of several designs and a witness to Wren's never-ending quest for improvement [119].<sup>14</sup> The intense aesthetic pleasure which one is bound to experience when visiting St Paul's is also mingled today with an immense sense of relief that this great cathedral survived, almost miraculously, the bombardments of the Second World War.

Wren had to submit his designs to the Commissioners and it was the second plan, rather than the first, that really concerned him. In the library of St Paul's it is still possible to see the model in wood of Wren's favourite design, which would have been outstanding in its beauty even in that age [120].

The design was a Greek cross, but the ends of the arms were rounded and superbly modulated, which not only enriched the interior but gave the exterior of the building a superb sweep of curving lines. To the west there was to be a portico and a pediment and an oval-domed ante-chapel. The main feature was a great dome, supported by pilasters and arches, and crowned with an elegant lantern that contrasted with the severely dignified lines of the main building. The interior was dominated by the circle of eight great pillars which supported the drum and cupola. Fluted pilasters of the colossal order were used to modify any effect of heaviness. The arches, too, were differentiated, and those framing the entrance to the four arms of the cross were wider and taller than those in between. The lighting both by large bays and the tall windows of the drum was an essential part of Wren's aim to give a clear view of the altar and the apse.

Though one may be reminded of the Pantheon, or discover the influence of Bramante or Michelangelo, it was a very individual and graceful invention, which might indeed please Wren, but did not please the Commissioners. It was too reminiscent of St Peter's in Rome to find any favour with the Church of England. This is understandable enough. The clergy and the parishioners suspected that Wren had been corrupted by foreign influences, and this would give the Puritans good cause to complain. It was decided that even if a classical style were to be allowed, there must be a nave and two aisles. Wren had to give way.

In 1675 he submitted another plan that was not entirely what he wanted, but one which he thought nevertheless could be made into something beautiful. This time it was in the form of a Latin cross with a nave and two aisles. The main building consisted of six bays and the long choir, terminated by an apse, consisted of three. Over the large crossing was a circular drum supporting a low dome whence there sprang a tall pagoda-like steeple. Outside the north and south sides was a small façade of two storeys in the Roman manner; the principal entrance to the cathedral, a colonnaded portico which formed a vestibule, had two small shallow cupolas which somewhat recall the portico that had been done by Inigo Jones.

The Commissioners accepted these plans, which became known as the Warrant Design, but in the warrant it was laid down that Wren would have 'the liberty, in the execution of his work, to make some variation, rather ornamental than essential, as from time to time he should see proper'. It was still not St Paul's, but one was coming nearer to it.

The first stone was laid on 21st June 1675 and building went on uninterrupted, but at a very slow pace. It was begun at the east end but shortly afterwards work was started at other points of the chantry. It was however a long time before St Paul's, as we see it, took on its definite shape, a period which saw economic changes, political revolutions, and wars.

But this very slowness in building gave Wren time to mature his plans, to study more profoundly work being done by his contemporaries and to introduce substantial changes in the Warrant Design.

Since stone blocks could not be found large enough for the original colossal order of columns for the portico, this had to be abandoned and the present plan, where the portico has two storeys of coupled columns, six on the ground floor and four above, was substituted. The whole is crowned by a triangular pediment, adorned by a bas-relief and three large statues placed at its points [118].

It was not until 1697 that the church, or rather the chancel, was consecrated for a service to celebrate the Peace of Ryswick, but even seven years later, when Queen Anne wished to celebrate the victory of Blenheim by a *Te Deum*, the dome and the towers had not even been begun. It needed yet another eight years before the building was finished, and there was little in common between it and the design that had been approved thirty-seven years earlier. But the differences themselves bear witness to the evolution of Wren's genius, which not only retained some of the grandeur of his Great Model—had indeed expanded it—but which was a result of assimilation and meditation upon the works then being erected in Rome and classical buildings in Paris.

The chancel was the first part of the cathedral to be begun and to be finished, and here the influence of the Inigo Jones' tradition is most marked. Then when we come to the façades of the transepts, we might be in six-





**113** The Queen's House at Greenwich, built by Inigo Jones, has all the regularity and simplicity of Palladio's villas in Terre Ferme, not far from Venice

**114** The Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, by Inigo Jones, shows a break with the English tradition. Again it is Palladian, with its elegant strength, general use of decorative detail, garlands, cornice in relief and balustrade







Inigo Jones's projected design for the Palace of Whitehall. England, like the other great European Powers, had ambitious designs for royal residences, but their very size made them impracticable

116

Rubens's subject for the ceiling of the Banqueting Hall was the apotheosis of James I, a mythological poem in honour of the King, in the manner of the Venetians who were wont to celebrate the glory of their beautiful city



Van Dyck was a pupil of Rubens and a close friend of the Italian painters. Here Charles I is represented as a personification of the Baroque knight by one of the greatest portrait painters of his time

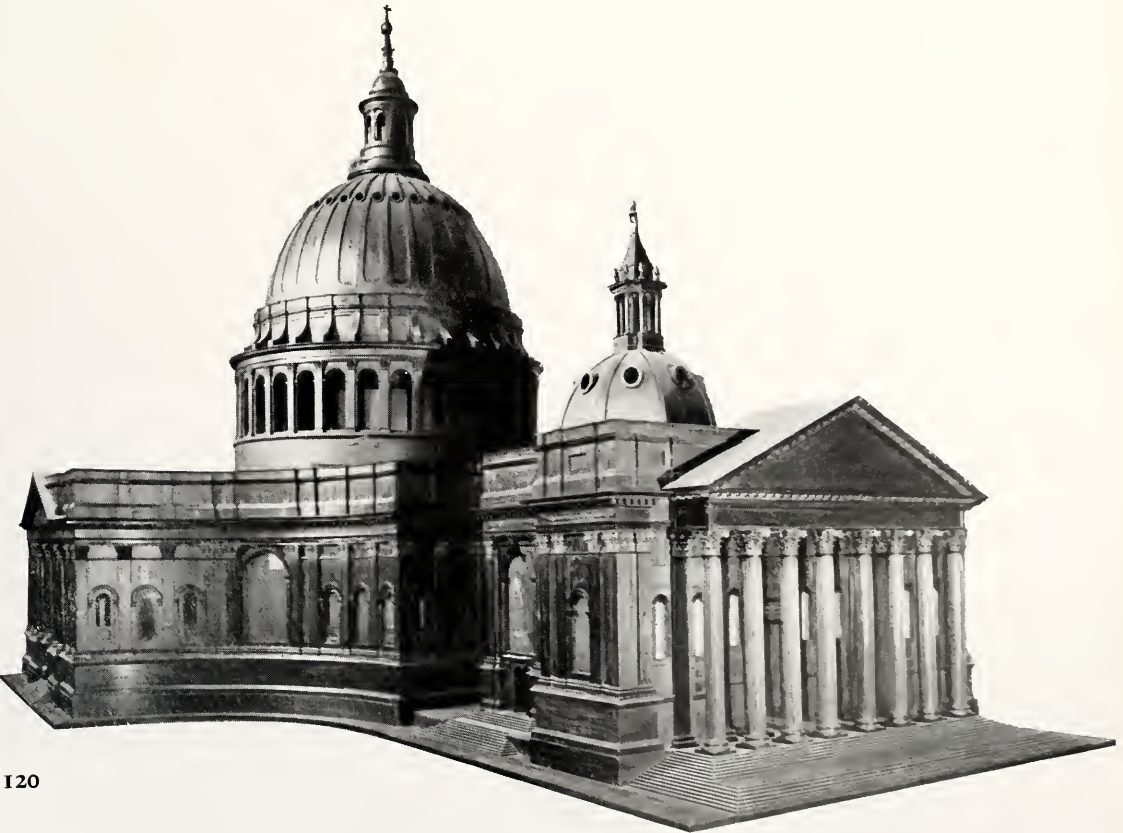








St Paul's Cathedral in London (ABOVE) is one of the finest monuments of the seventeenth century. Here the lessons of the Renaissance are fused with those of Italian Baroque. LEFT: The facade, a two-storeyed classical portico with elegant towers in the style of the Baroque architects of Italy. BELOW: Wren's favourite (rejected) model; the effect was too Roman to satisfy either the partisans of the Gothic tradition or the austerity of the Puritans





RIGHT. The interior of St Paul's with the traditional nave and two side aisles, and the vast opening of the dome extending over the arms of the transepts

121

LEFT. The unforgettable dome of St Paul's (ABOVE) bears comparison with St Peter's and the Invalides. It gives an incomparable impression of grandeur, the result of refined architectural perception. Between two columns are niches screening buttresses. The graceful apse (BELOW) shows the influence of Inigo Jones and Palladio



122







ABOVE RIGHT. The garden front of Hampton Court, by Wren, less impressive than Versailles, and at once symmetrical and full of interest: a model of seventeenth-century Royal art

BELOW RIGHT. Verrio's painting, on the grand staircase at Hampton Court, with its antique setting, animation and symbolism, brings the decorative splendour of the Baroque to an English palace

LEFT. The belfry of St Vedast's, by Wren, elegant and varied, unites the soaring quality of the Gothic spire with the refinements of Borromini's campaniles





125



126





127 Greenwich Palace and Hospital, a harmonious blend of styles, superbly situated on the banks of the Thames, is one of the finest architectural groups in Europe

128 The towers (BELOW), by Vanbrugh, have the same elegant grace and strength as the towers and the dome of St Paul's





At Castle Howard, Vanbrugh, England's great Baroque architect, has multiplied the decorative elements, emphasising the reliefs in the manner of the architects of Central Europe. ABOVE: The east façade. BELOW: The central pile, where the huge, long pilasters rhythmically break up the façade







*Country*

- 131** Generously proportioned and monumental without being heavy, Blenheim Palace, by Vanbrugh, remains one of the most representative works of the age of grandeur. The north portico (BELOW) combines the grace of curves and the majesty of verticals. Statues and pinnacles lighten any excessive solemnity

*Country Life*

**132**





133

*Country Life*

Seaton Delaval has been described as Vanbrugh's 'drama in stone'. The general impression is of fortress-like strength, but the architect has ingeniously combined borrowings from various styles, and the effects of contrast never fail in piquant originality. There is, however, a touch of coldness in the interior (BELOW)

*Country Life*

134







There is much eclecticism and backward-looking compromise in the façade of St George's, Bloomsbury, by Hawksmoor: the regular portico is in contrast with the composite tower and the antique pyramid surmounted by a statue of St George

135

In contrast to the formal façade, the arch of the choir and the placing of the columns give an air of grace and intimacy to the interior of St George's



136



As a result of his long stay in Rome, Gibbs introduced a seventeenth-century type Baroque church, St Mary-le-Strand, into London at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as though in defiance of fashion and the age

137

Resemblances between St Mary-le-Strand and Pietro da Cortona's façade for Santa Maria della Pace, in Rome, underline Gibbs's Baroque inspiration



138





The apse in the interior of St Mary-le-Strand is formed within a triumphal arch, with two storeys of columns and surmounted by a great pediment. Light enters through wide bays

I39

Wenceslas Hollar, an exiled Czech settled in London, has maintained his reputation as one of the best interpreters of the eighteenth-century English landscape, with its masses of greenery and gentle lines, as at Albury





teenth century Rome. With the small semicircular porticoes they are strangely reminiscent of that harmonious but dramatic design by Pietro da Cortona for Santa Maria della Pace, which Bernini had adapted for Sant' Andrea al Quirinale [119].

When we come to the main entrance we see that the two western towers, that had been rather timid and not very high in the original sketch, have now blossomed out into two magnificent steeples which, even before one can take in the design of coupled columns projecting, and convex bays with columns between them, makes an immediate impression of gracefulness and elation [118]. They lead up by complicated volutes to a lantern and ogee. There is an indisputable and enchanting relationship between them and the campaniles we have noticed at Sant' Agnese in the Piazza Navona.

But the greatest innovation, breaking away from the hesitations of the Warrant Design and triumphing over all material difficulties, is undoubtedly the dome. Its effect is all the greater since the original length of the nave had been curtailed to three bays, the same number as the chancel, yet there is still the peristyle with its two adjacent chapels to give an air of spaciousness and solemnity to the entrance.

At the crossing Wren placed an enormous drum upon eight great pillars to support the dome [121]. This could not have been entirely constructed in stone, because its weight would endanger the solidity of the edifice. Inspired no doubt by Mansard's design for the Invalides, Wren used the drum to support one dome in stone (the one seen from the interior) and above this built a brick cone to support the lantern with its ball and cross and the supports for the exterior lead-covered dome.

The outside, with its great round gallery ornamented with Corinthian columns and surmounted by a balustrade might be a gigantic reflection of a Bramante temple. Then the drum reappears, pierced by windows alternating with pilasters, before the dome itself surges up to the fine and elegant lantern. It is a superb crown to the cathedral and it seems to transform and dominate even the city that surrounds it.

To understand the work fully it is necessary to take another view from the nave. When the crossing is reached, the drum and dome rest on a space where nave, chancel, the aisles and the transepts all meet between the eight pillars [123]. Because the aisles are not as high as the main features, there was a problem to be solved that needed all Wren's ingenuity. The four pillars which form the cross are of equal height with the nave. But between these, arches of the same height but of a wider span are introduced, and the problem of the lower height of the aisles was bridged by introducing a second, lower arch to support a balcony or choir stall. The rhythm between broad and narrow arches which had been apparent in the Great Model appeared again, modified to deal with the problem of a nave and two aisles leading up to a dome. St Paul's Cathedral impresses a visitor so much by its grandeur, is so homogeneous and the whole is so balanced that the

176 ingenuity the architect had to employ to achieve this is quite forgotten.

When one analyses the various elements of this great building it is almost embarrassing to find so many reproductions of earlier works: the apse [122] reminds one of Palladio and Inigo Jones; at the entrance to the transepts are copies of Pietro da Cortona; even the dome itself has echoes of Bramante and Michelangelo and owes something to Mansart; the western towers could scarcely have been conceived had not Borromini and Rainaldi designed Sant' Agnese. One is tempted to ask what Wren himself invented. His genius (and his fertility of invention deserves no lesser name) consisted in his power to weld so many diverse elements into one single whole that is incomparable and, at the turn of the century, gave the splendour of English artistic achievement a lasting place in the history of Europe.

Having said that, we may well revert to the question whether Baroque or classic influences had the upper hand here. If one considers the monumental calm of the dome, which turns away from the lines of St Peter's cupola only in favour of those of the Pantheon, it is obviously impossible to talk about it in the same terms that one would apply to the work of Bernini or the craftsmen of eighteenth-century Germany. Yet if we study the various stages of Wren's designs one would not be wrong to say that he was a man haunted by Roman art. They reveal revisions of the original conception and at the same time the introduction of audacious new ideas permissible only to an experienced connoisseur of the *seicento* in Rome, someone with an exact knowledge of ground-plans and elevations to back up his vision of the building itself.

He may have started in the Palladian tradition, which was the *Leitmotif* of English architecture even after the death of Inigo Jones, but Wren became so increasingly at home with Roman art that at the end he might have been a Roman artist himself. The latest building carried out at St Paul's might well have been directed by a pupil of Bernini.

None but a Baroque artist, and an outstanding Baroque artist, could have preserved a Gothic ground-plan while building a monument in Renaissance taste, and then show himself such a master of the classical idiom that he could break every traditional rule and yet maintain characteristics of harmony and logic in a work which sometimes has only the appearance of being organic.

Having pointed out the ingenuities Wren used in the construction of the dome, it is now right to remark upon another very singular feature of St Paul's. From outside, nothing betrays the inequality between the centre nave and the aisles. The outside walls with their two storeys have a perfect arrangement, with the succession of windows with triangular pediments and pilasters, and the balustrade overhead—in fact one would call it a purely Palladian façade. What actually happens is more complicated. The first storey does indeed carry on the motif of the ground floor without projection or disconnexion, but the walls stand up alone, a mere screen.



They are built up to the height of the nave, with which they have no connexion. Indeed there is a large empty space between the two, in which the aisles are hidden. The windows certainly do help to light the nave, but only at second hand since what light they pass on must be infiltrated by their replicas in the nave itself. This ingenious solution, if one regards it as a trick to solve a difficult architectural problem, is, one must admit, very Baroque. No less so is the device Wren used in the colonnade of the dome. Looking at it from the ground, no one would notice at first that between every fourth column there are niches, for they are so discreetly executed that they do not break the general symmetry, yet, as buttresses, they play an essential part in carrying the weight of the dome, which appears to be carried by the pillars alone.

The exceptionally gifted craftsmen who worked with Wren should also be mentioned, for their great skill and taste gave the interior of St Paul's its rich quality. Foremost was Grinling Gibbons who carved the choir stalls enriched with flowers, garlands, arabesques and putti. Tijou, who had fled from France, was responsible for the fine wrought-iron work and Thornhill painted the dome with eight large compositions depicting the miracles of St Paul. Nor should the artists who modelled the stucco garlands, roses, cherubs, vases and shells be forgotten, for all of them contributed to make St Paul's so splendid and vibrant that the cathedral might have been in Italy. Their achievement becomes even more remarkable when one realizes that it was carried out in a Protestant church and that, instead of the severity which one might expect, there is an understanding of a more sensuous or humane conception of religion.

St Paul's alone, as the work of a lifetime, would have ensured Wren's fame. But he was one of those geniuses who were driven by the very age they lived in to create and innovate incessantly. One is reminded of how Michelangelo was chivvied and harassed by impatient Popes, of the amazing output of the great Renaissance artists and their Baroque successors—Bernini, Fischer von Erlach and Mathias Braun in Bohemia. Those artists who could stand the pace had indeed to be men of steel: and they were. Titian lived to be a hundred, Bernini eighty-two and Wren died when he was ninety-one. Normal men would have given in earlier, and that Borromini committed suicide becomes comprehensible. The amount of Wren's work may be seen in a picture of London painted by Canaletto from the gardens of Somerset House. It is a view of the Thames busy with barges and boats, but the central point is the cathedral of St Paul's and along the river bank innumerable steeples rise, like minarets, to pierce the sky. Most of these were of churches that Wren had built or restored.

In the Great Fire of 1666 eighty churches were destroyed and it was decided to replace fifty-one of them. At the turn of the century forty had already been rebuilt. The steeples and towers, whether of lead or stone, retained a Gothic feeling in their graceful elevations. This appearance was

safeguarded to conform with the liturgical demands of the Anglican clerics, but to understand what Wren achieved it would be necessary to consider the plan of every church to appreciate the extent of his learning,<sup>15</sup> his genius for adaptation when faced with a given site and his creative powers. In the plans for his churches he had frequently adopted the ellipse with the corners cut off which was often used in Baroque ecclesiastical architecture. If one considers St Paul's one would call Wren a Palladian—which is a more accurate epithet than Classicist—whose work became over the years increasingly Baroque. Yet to attempt to give any date for this change is quite impossible. Wren had so great a range of talent that even in his early years as an architect he could produce something satisfactory and ingenious whatever the circumstances. Between 1672 and 1679 St Stephen Walbrook was built, a church which has been described as 'the most perfect work, Wren's masterpiece, a model of elegance, whose plan is at the same time so original and so simple'.<sup>16</sup> The inspiration is undoubtedly classical and one could say that the dome reminds one, in miniature, of the Pantheon, and the sixteen Corinthian columns, though more delicate and slender, have some affinity with the nave of Palladio's church on the Giudecca. Yet, if one wishes to continue the comparisons, the subtlety of placing the arches, the lunettes, and the lighting of this church is not far removed from the effects that Borromini achieved. Perhaps this is not so surprising if one looks at the spire of St Vedast, hardly a stone's throw away from St Paul's [124]. Here the tower is first a square, its next storey is concave, the next, smaller, one is convex and it finishes as an obelisk.

Such a rhythmic interplay of contrasting elements in the same spirit as Borromini is without question pure Baroque and would not look out of place in Rome, though the subtleties and complexities of the design may not be immediately apparent, but it is tempered by the leap upwards of the spire, which is the first thing that strikes the onlooker and hides the complexity of the details. Another of Wren's steeples nearby seems to be the more Baroque of the two. This is St Mary le Bow, famous for its peal of bells. It is the most spectacular of Wren's steeples, but though its volutes, columns, and height give unique gracefulness to the superimposed stages, the design is not really as Baroque as that of St Vedast. Nor can one ignore the tower of St Martin Ludgate, which is joined to the majestic and classical façade by two great volutes. Above the volutes is an octagonal lantern and a charming lead spire with an ogee dome, a balcony and an obelisk. How Baroque Wren could be one can also see from prints of St Mary Aldermanbury (now, alas, gutted) which show him as a virtuoso who could use motifs as flamboyant as those of Guarini.

Secular architecture plays perhaps as important a part as his ecclesiastical building in adding to Wren's stature, although the habit of attributing to him any outstanding house, whose architect is unknown, is perhaps flatter-



ing, but most misleading. Enough authenticated work remains to show he was no less versatile in this field than in his city churches. The Palladianism which one can see at Cambridge in the library of Trinity College or in his work in Emmanuel College, contrasts with the great colonnades at Greenwich that remind one of Bernini, or his work at Hampton Court which seems to compete with the neo-classicism of the French. Wren's amazing power of absorbing ideas certainly resulted in a great number of most beautiful buildings in England, which are a definite contribution to European art of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, even though it is still questionable whether England evolved anything that could justly be called an original style. In any case, there had been a considerable change during this time in the social background, and during the century England might, to a limited extent, have become more receptive to Baroque. About 1630, one could say that the Court and the aristocracy either imposed their taste or were content to go their way in opposition to practically the whole nation. Neither the style of Inigo Jones, so reminiscent of the Venetian Renaissance, nor the Roman style that soon replaced it, had any appeal outside this limited group of connoisseurs. The City Companies in London, the Universities, and the great number of country gentry had little sympathy with these trends. But with the Restoration there grew a feeling for the new style that continued throughout the reigns of Charles II, James II and Queen Anne. The Revolution in 1688, though politically of vital importance in English history, had scarcely any effect on its culture nor did it interrupt the development of its civilization. This period saw, socially, an increase in the power of the ruling classes, for the nation as a whole, in so far as such tendencies can be said to exist, identified themselves with the aims of the aristocracy, who ruled efficiently and successfully. The division between Whig and Tory was largely a question of parliamentary jockeying and although this division went on for a long time, it had little to do with differing social ideologies. The parties were representative of a prosperous, powerful, and essentially united nation which was becoming as a whole more favourably inclined towards the grandiose and ostentatious. At this time, indeed, it is hardly surprising that English architecture developed a style that almost imperceptibly modified earlier traditions and became something more expressive and dramatic which can appropriately be called Baroque, for the term Baroque must not be identified only with the passion for curved lines, the mass of statuary and the fluid designs which were aimed at in the contemporary architecture of Central Europe.

It is indeed very different and the reasons are obvious. The English were less imaginative, or imaginative in a different way. Their religion, especially the High Church Laudian tradition, tended to keep strictly to a ritual that was admirably suited to lend solemnity to their services, but was not susceptible to the sentimental effervescence that was aroused and satisfied by the extremes of the Baroque style. The main factor was, perhaps, that in England rationalism and empiricism were becoming increasingly

influential in intellectual circles. Both in the Universities and in learned scientific circles, the discourses of Locke, the discoveries of Newton, or the new technical experiments—which later resulted in such a great change in the economy of the country during the century, that is, they led to a much tighter connexion between the work of the country and the town—these were the main topics of discussion and interest. It was hardly the right atmosphere to encourage the growth of an exaggerated or sensuous Baroque. English Baroque waned during the last years of the seventeenth and the first years of the eighteenth centuries, but was truly Baroque: this is seen by innovations, the quest for new effects and the free eloquence of the style, which in some examples might even be called Mannerist. A sense of mystery, of the marvellous are lacking, but the frigid serenity of neo-classicism is also absent from this style which was an expression of triumphant glory. It was this that enabled foreign Baroque artists to feel at home in England.<sup>17</sup>

It is odd that the dynastic changes of 1688 involved a change of royal residences. There was not much middle-class republicanism noticeable when William of Orange assumed the English throne, however much some might wish to simplify the pattern of this rather liberal era. It is even more curious that all the alleged reasons which people attribute to Louis XIV for building Versailles—a purely individual desire to build a palace which he thought worthy of himself away from a stuffy and unpleasant city—now actually became true in England. William of Orange, an asthmatic, dreaded the smog of London.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps there were also other, more sentimental reasons why he refused to live in the capital: the palace of Whitehall was haunted by memories of the Stuarts, and aesthetically considered it was an untidy, half-completed conglomeration of buildings.

He decided to establish his residence some distance outside London, and finally chose Hampton Court. Circumstances beyond his control, the insistence of the citizens of London that the sovereign should live in the capital, forced him eventually to compromise by spending part of his time in Kensington Palace. But Hampton Court always remained his favourite residence. And here too it is strange that Hampton Court seems to have suffered the fate of so many Baroque palaces. The first plan that Wren drew up for it shows a façade reminiscent of Roman Baroque twenty-five years earlier, with a colossal order round the entrance, an attic storey with statuary, the whole surmounted by a dome and with the roofs of the wings in terraces. The cost of this would have been excessive and it became imperative to find a simpler and cheaper plan. Once again we find the classical style infiltrating, not on account of any admiration for it, but because it was cheaper. So Hampton Court, as we see it today, with the old Tudor palace so cleverly modulating, by way of the colonnade in the Clock Court, into the regular lines of a classical mansion, is a sober but pleasing building, royal but not pretentious, enlivened by the use of red bricks and



white stone [125]. Some aspects—the grandeur of the porches, the attic storey and balustrade, or the sweep of the staircase decorated by Verrio [126] and the arrangement of the royal suites which are adapted to domestic or public functions, or the eastern gardens—all recall, to a certain extent, Versailles. But it is an echo, a great palace that has become the seat of a country gentleman, and only its details are really Baroque.

If one wants to find a building that is essentially Baroque, one must go to Greenwich, look at the city churches, or explore the country houses. If you sail down the Thames to Greenwich, the distant view of the two towers, visible long before the whole building comes into view, inspires one with the same awe that one feels upon seeing San Giorgio Maggiore when rowing into Venice, or, in Rome, seeing St Peter's from the Pincio gardens [127]. There is a spaciousness about it, which is so difficult to achieve in a European town, and which never succeeds better than when air and water are combined together. It makes even Hampton Court look cramped, but what should have been a royal palace, second only to Windsor, is now the naval hospital, in the same way as Chelsea was the army hospital. The achievements and the glory of British sailors doubtless merited the sumptuousness of this 'asylum', and one aspect of British grandeur has here found apt expression.

There is no trace left of the old Tudor palace. The Queen's House, built by Inigo Jones at the bottom of Greenwich Hill, is the earliest building that remains and when, under Charles II, Webb erected what is now known as King Charles' Building, it was some distance from the Queen's House and designed to front on the river. It is built in Portland stone in the form of an almost symmetrical quadrangle. Both on the east and west there is a Corinthian portico with entablature and a pediment with allegorical sculpture in the tympanum; at each angle Webb placed an advanced pavilion with Corinthian pilasters.

This was the core around which Wren had to construct a building that would give the whole some semblance of unity. His first idea, which may have been inspired by Les Invalides or a more mature development of his plans for Chelsea Hospital, was to reproduce the King Charles' Buildings to form a square and to make a domed chapel the dominating feature, with an entrance of colossal order. This would, however, have made it impossible for the Queen's House to be seen from the river.

In order to avoid this it was essential that a free space was left between the river and the Queen's House if it were to remain the cynosure of the design, and it was equally essential that the eye should be led towards it gradually if it were not to appear dwarfed. Wren decided to duplicate the wing that Webb had built, and then build another narrower courtyard which would be more in keeping with the breadth of the Queen's House. This fine Baroque interpretation of space was worthy of Wren's genius and was a result of the same ingeniousness and taste which he had already shown at St Paul's and Hampton Court. The gallery with twin columns

remains one of his best works, for had not a gallery of columns also finished off St Peter's?

The close connection with this work of Bernini explains in part certain modifications to the 1696 plan which were attempted. Two disciples of Wren, his juniors by a generation, John Vanbrugh, born in 1664 and Nicholas Hawksmoor, born in 1661, intervened in the construction of Greenwich. It was just after the Peace of Ryswick, when people everywhere were looking to the future with more confidence and courage. Vanbrugh thought that Wren's colonnade might serve as an avenue to a construction which was to be even more majestic and which would close off the whole at the end, opposite the Thames. This should be a great oval place and a tall chapel, crowned by a dome and four towers. He did not mind if the Queen's House were sacrificed, for this church would take its place. In this way Wren's building, which was solid and reasonable, was put aside for an audacious invention, which would in fact upset it.

In the end things did not go so far; the style which Webb had given to the Charles II Building was still dominant in the first court. It was strictly reproduced in the building opposite, which was put up in Queen Anne's reign, in 1711. Each of these buildings was 'doubled'; thus were formed the two stately blocks which were a sort of propylaeum to the hospital and whose regular porticoes face on to the river.

This second courtyard was introduced by two great porticoes surmounted by cupolas, with a colonnade on each side running towards the base of the hill. When Vanbrugh came to design the great hall and the chapel, he adapted Wren's orders, and the hall in King William's Building and the chapel in the Queen Anne block face each other symmetrically. So in the Royal Hospital at Greenwich we see now two sets of carefully balanced buildings: the first running up from the river, regular, and rather lower than the second range, which with its colonnades and commanding domes makes a much more lively design, and finally the small, exquisite Palladian masterpiece of the Queen's House. To walk up from the river frontage through the majestic severity of the King Charles II and the Queen Anne wings to the columns and cupolas is an astonishing architectural experience. In fact, the vista of twin columns is as splendidly triumphal as Wren had imagined it. Then, above the drums of the twin cupolas the display of columns recalls the design for the towers of St Paul's, though here they are on a larger scale and uphold, not an intricate and fantastic termination, but domes which recall, in a minor key, the greatest feature of the cathedral [128].

The two great buildings which stand face to face—the hall and the chapel—are both tall and light, both have two storeys of windows, and to enter either one passes through a magnificent portico. In the hall the fenestration is enlivened by the pattern of pilasters of the colossal order, in the chapel by the delicate lines of the balcony. At the end of the hall there is a dais backed by a magnificent example of mural painting; in the chapel there is an elaborate altar picture. The painted ceiling of the chapel might





VI The paintings on the walls and the figures sculpted on the organ (built by Sonnholz in 1733) in the Abbey Church of Melk help to give the undulating impression which pervades the whole church





perhaps be considered as elegant but rather frigid; the ceiling of the hall is by contrast a quite surprisingly sumptuous masterpiece by Thornhill. It is even more surprising if you realize that this sort of work had hitherto always been undertaken by foreign artists; Italians or French had catered for the British taste more successfully than any native. At the time Thornhill was only thirty-three, and though the composition shows more cleverness than originality, it was a turning point in English art. Thornhill had shown that a native could also be a master when it came to the apotheosis of a monarch in the grand Baroque manner.

Leaving Greenwich by boat and looking along the great colonnades to the Queen's House, one can see that it is not quite adequate in scale: it has been preserved one might say by an act of architectural piety, but Vanbrugh should not be condemned out of hand for his plans. Yet the final impression is that the beauty of these two styles can exist and blend with each other: the classic note struck by Inigo Jones does not jar with the richer tones of the Baroque, which here achieve one of the greatest masterpieces in northern Europe.

Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor, who revealed their genius at Greenwich, Archer and Gibbs, who was twenty years younger and whose working life lasted till after the Hanoverian succession, were the English Baroque architects. Vanbrugh had some contacts and knowledge of France, though most of it was, unfortunately, through being arrested as a spy and imprisoned in the Bastille and at Vincennes. Some authorities have thought that this disagreeable experience accounts in some ways for the fortress-like characteristics of some of his work, as he had become familiar with military architecture. In any case the English were thoroughly conversant with the French collection of prints of Marot the Elder and they were considerably preoccupied by the buildings that distinguished the later years of the Grand Monarch: the Invalides, Marly and the chapel at Versailles.

Vanbrugh had an extremely forceful personality, which sought expression not only in his architectural works but also in the comedies he wrote. Yet his technical abilities and his cultural outlook show not much more than a very vivid sensibility to the most dramatic aspects of contemporary taste and contemporary events. He remains the one person who almost succeeded in giving English Baroque the emotional feeling and warmth that it lacked.

The first of his masterpieces, Castle Howard, was designed for the Earl of Carlisle, and both the original plans, which were turned down, and the building as it is now, show a quite startling break with contemporary taste and the accepted plans for country houses, no less than an equally surprising affinity with what was being built in northern Italy or central Europe [129]. The fine, two-storeyed central block of the palace is raised on a rusticated foundation, then there are the colossal order of pilasters, the frieze,

the triangular pediment, and a balustrade ornamented with vases which is, in itself, heavily ornamented; yet, for full measure, or perhaps over-full measure, Vanbrugh adds a great octagonal dome [130]. There are, too, the low wings crowned with cupolas. The sophistication, the charming ingenuity one might expect to come across somewhere near Vienna or, perhaps, in Bohemia—it is startling to find it in a country house in Yorkshire, which was built between 1702 and 1714.

Blenheim is, however, more characteristic. At that time the War of the Spanish Succession was raging, a war which superficially seemed a dynastic squabble, the question of whether the grandson of Louis XIV should inherit the Spanish throne. It was more than that: it was not only a European but a universal crisis. It was, in fact, a struggle in which the supremacy of the continental powers, France and the Imperial Domains, was at stake against the maritime powers whose strength derived from international commerce. The union of Spain and France might well have destroyed the economic expansion of England and also of the United Provinces. Only if we realize this can we appreciate how important Marlborough's victories were. To have inflicted the first resounding defeat on the troops of Louis XIV was glory enough; to have saved Vienna from an attack from the West, where only twenty years ago the Emperor had nearly succumbed to an assault from the East, was also glorious. But the greatest gain was that Austria was still in the coalition, and that France might still therefore be beaten.

The French seemed to judge it rather differently. It was a blow to national prestige, but the battle had been fought so far away that the impact on public opinion was not very great. There was a feeling that the future fate of the country was not jeopardized, and this indeed was true. But that two such different views of Blenheim should be entertained is quite comprehensible and the British Government was quite right to reward Marlborough for his victory; nor in that most practical age could any reward be more befitting than an estate and a palace which was as Queen Anne said, to perpetuate the glory of Blenheim in its beauty and magnificence. It was a scheme that would naturally appeal to Vanbrugh. What St Paul's was for the Church and what Whitehall Palace would have been for the monarchy was to be rivalled at Blenheim, which was to be a symbol of the grandeur and glory of the English nation. It should be a monument to England's victories and the fact that the victorious general was to live there as well seems almost an afterthought. The huge scale of the work, the vast courtyards, the wings that are terminated by pavilions so massive that they seem feudal fortresses built in a contemporary idiom, the use of every Renaissance style, the great oval on the east, the colossal entrance on the south, the columns and the majestic terraces which add a horizontal element to the grand design give an impression which one can justly call imperial [131 & 132]. It is interesting and perhaps significant that Fischer von Erlach, who was later to create the 'Reichstil', was living in



London at this time and that the Imperial ambassador was Vratislav de Mitrovic, who was renowned for his grandeur and love of building. Indeed, England and France, who had for so long been estranged, seemed at this time to share one thing at least in common, a self-assured and indeed audacious outlook. At least the reigning classes were inspired by it, and it was an atmosphere which could on occasion be one most favourable for artistic undertakings. The details were different, but the inspiration and the final effect had much in common. Amongst the painters who were responsible for decorating the interior of Blenheim was Louis Laguerre, who was not only a Frenchman but actually came from Versailles. He was the son of someone employed in the royal menagerie and it was said that Louis XIV had stood godfather to him. He served his apprenticeship with Le Brun, and in Blenheim one comes across many echoes of Versailles. The paintings decorating the *Escalier des Ambassadeurs* in Versailles (whose loss is so bitterly to be deplored) would have been just as much at home in Blenheim. The richness, the wealth of invention and the flowing composition which Laguerre achieved in his decorations owe much to Le Vau and Le Brun, but they should be classified more as Baroque than classical. But if one thinks one can see, both at Greenwich and at Blenheim, that Vanbrugh was indeed an architect in the Baroque tradition, the impression made by another of his most famous works—Seaton Delaval in Northumberland—makes one think again. There seems little to link the Baroque architect of Castle Howard with the builder of this extraordinary façade [133]. Baroque is, after all, joyful, exuberant and of an almost overflowing abundance. But Seaton Delaval faces us with a massiveness and severity that remind one both of a fortress and of a cathedral. It is too eclectic to express that free fantastic quality which is a character of true Baroque. Bernini and Borromini seem infinitely remote. Even the grandiose imperial style of Blenheim seems alien. Here one has something quite different—the work of an artist who has mastered every style and has decided to dare something new, and revel in his novelties, however outrageous they may have seemed [134].

The central block is Palladian in style but huge in scale; it contrasts strangely with the octagonal towers at each end of the long façade, for they seem rather to remind one of medieval fortresses adapted and civilized; then at the rear of the building are the towers which are vaguely reminiscent of the designs made for Blenheim. If one associates Baroque with curved lines and a sense of movement (which were, after all, its outstanding characteristics) it makes one hesitate to consider these huge stolid blocks of masonry, with abrupt angles, as a Baroque work. But one can contrast more aptly two conceptions of architecture and art in general. There is first the school which accepted the classical rules and regulations and which inspired artists to compete with each other to produce the most beautiful results within the canon. But then there was another, an eclectic school expressing individual tastes by choosing different themes whether

they were 'correct' or not. Vanbrugh proves himself, at Blenheim, at Castle Howard, and at Seaton Delaval, as a thoroughly Baroque architect in this sense. One might say the same about the work of Hawksmoor and Gibbs, both of whom added much to the great London churches. Hawksmoor, who often had recourse to various styles, created some extremely surprising but very charming buildings. He liked to make use of very heavy rustication which sets off the high arches of his windows or his semi-circular *yeux-de-boeuf*.

Looking at St Mary Woolnoth, which he completed in 1727, one can feel Hawksmoor's pleasure in his own virtuosity as he designed the façade with its banded rustication with Tuscan columns at the side (also rusticated), up to the small twin turrets which crown the composition and are reminiscent of Seaton Delaval. At the great church he built at Spitalfields (Christ Church), the portico is surmounted by a vast arch above the architrave, and then the tower, slightly set back, has wings which unite it with incurved walls, pierced by high windows, and this is so successful that all sense of heaviness has been avoided. In the small and beautiful church of St George's, Bloomsbury, the steeple is to the side of the main building and is again handled in a masterly fashion [135]. Here we find a refinement of the antique, for the belfry consists of a small classical temple surmounted by a pyramidal design which is inspired by the great mausoleum at Halicarnassus. It is crowned by a statue of George I. He also revived the antique in the rotunda in the grounds of Castle Howard—a theme which was taken over and enlarged by Gibbs when he designed the Radcliffe Camera at Oxford.

English church interiors, which are usually lit by high windows, run some risk of appearing barren and cold. The usual square or rectangular naves, and bare walls, could scarcely offer a greater contrast to the Italian Baroque churches with their profusion of ornaments, statues, reredoses and pictures, but nevertheless sometimes one comes across some decorative motif in Hawksmoor's work, which offsets the austerity of the whole and recalls Mannerism or Baroque.

Sometimes there is a narrow gallery, often in front of the choir, in the great arches, or again there may be an almost theatrical use of side wings.<sup>19</sup> In St George's, Bloomsbury, the interior has a richness which quite belies the austerity of the exterior [136]. The nave is restrained to a square, lit by arched windows; but the altar, surmounted by a reredos, seems to be in another building, beyond the gallery formed by two great arches and groups of Corinthian pillars, two for the first and four for the one nearest to the altar. At one of these extremities, the gallery ends with a round apse. This, repeated, gives an unexpected feeling of depth. The whole composition shows great elegance and a harmony between the subtle lines of the arches, the architraves and the tall pillars. But, above all, the perspectives between the screen of pillars and the play of light and shade seem to surround the altar with a feeling of meditation and mystery.



Gibbs had stayed in Rome at the beginning of the eighteenth century and had studied under Carlo Fontana. He had even thought for a while of becoming a Roman Catholic, before he settled down in the Church of England. When he became the surveyor to the Commissioners for the new churches which Queen Anne decided to build, this Roman background was almost his sole inspiration. St Mary-le-Strand, for instance, can hardly be considered as an English Baroque building [137]. The tall steeple may seem almost superimposed, but the semicircular and colonnaded portico and the beautiful decoration of the side walls recall, no less than the apsidal choir behind a triumphal arch inside [139], a purely Roman church in the tradition of Pietro da Cortona [138].

Gibbs is also looking back to the Baroque in the monument he designed for the Duke of Newcastle in Westminster Abbey. But later, the effect which he sought to achieve at St Martin-in-the-Fields, with its regular portico and triangular pediment, shows that his style was veering towards the classical.

One is amazed at the number of sources that these artists seem to have drawn their inspiration from. In the quadrangle of All Soul's at Oxford, Hawksmoor succeeds in creating a very stylized Gothic; though it has nothing in common with the Middle Ages which Guarini sought to recreate, it does manage to recapture in a unique manner the Gothic feeling, in the vertical upsurge of the lines of the portals, turrets and towers.

Such subtle adaptation, the variety of the models and even the ingenuity shown might lead one to suppose that this Baroque school consisted of imitators who adopted the style, not from any conviction, but to be fashionable. Yet it lasted until 1735 and even later, and where else at this date could such a thing happen? Was it, one wonders, the predilections of a few artists rather than a deeply felt expression of a civilization?

While in London Gibbs was giving a new life to the architecture that had been fashionable in Rome sixty years before, another architect, Colin Campbell, was publishing his *Vitruvius Britannicus*. The three volumes came out between 1715 and 1725 and, besides illustrating buildings carried out by English architects, added new designs. The preface stresses the need for a native and severely classical style.<sup>20</sup> It was a manifesto in honour of Palladio.

... the great *Palladio* who has exceeded all that were gone before him, and surpassed his contemporaries, whose ingenious labours will eclipse many, and rival most of the Ancients. And indeed, this excellent Architect seems to have arrived at a *Ne-plus-ultra* of his Art: With him the great Manner and exquisite Taste of Building is lost; for the *Italians* can no more now relish the Antique simplicity, but are entirely employed in capricious Ornaments, which must at last end in the *Gothick*. (This equation of what we call Baroque with 'the

Gothick' is most interesting and significant.) For Proof of this Assertion, I appeal to the productions of the last *Century*. How affected and licentious are the works of *Bernini* and *Fontana*! How wildly extravagant are the Designs of *Borromini*, who has endeavour'd to debauch Mankind with his odd and chiminal Beauties, where the Parts are without Proportion, Solids without their true Bearing, Heaps of Materials without Strength, excessive Ornament without Grace, and the Whole without Symmetry. (This shows an austerity of outlook which surpasses anything which even *Blondel*, the chief exponent of Classicism in France, ever dared say. But this condemnation has its contrast in the praise of *Inigo Jones*.)

It is then with the Renowned *Palladio* we enter the Lists, to whom we oppose the Famous *Inigo Jones*. Let the Banqueting House, those excellent Pieces at *Greenwich*, with many other things of this great Master be carefully examined; and I doubt not, but an impartial Judge will find in them all the Regularity of the former with an Addition of Beauty and Majesty, in which our *Architect* is esteemed to have outdone all that went before; and when the plans he has given of *Whitehall*, which you will find in the Second Volume, are carefully examined into I believe all Mankind will agree with me, that there is no Palace in the World to rival it.

Doubtless it may have been true, but we have only prints to go on—and there was scarcely a country in Europe that did not boast of having a palace unrivalled in the world. It was the nationalistic feeling of the British that very quickly convinced even those who despised the Baroque that they must praise *Wren*, and also the other English architects whom we call Baroque. The Englishman was proud of *St Paul's*. Also, though many might deny it, there was as much desire in England to impress the public and posterity by the erection of fine ostentatious monuments or tombs as anywhere else, whether or not one professed to be a Palladian or an admirer of *Bernini* or *Cortona*.

*Vitruvius Britannicus* displays with admiration designs for cupolas and pavilions that make it clear many English architects would have liked to have built in a much more Baroque manner than they were ever allowed to do. It is indeed an interesting speculation whether the design done by *Colin Campbell* himself, which is shown on Plate IX of the first volume, was seen by *Fischer von Erlach* when he came to London. It may or may not be mere chance that that imposing dome and the triumphal columns which decorate the portico fill one with uneasy recollections of the *Karlskirche* in Vienna.

It is true enough that one could condemn or even curse the Italian Baroque artists, but it was not so easy to create something that was totally dissimilar to their work: the ideals that all artists wished to express at that time were too closely allied. The exponents of the Baroque in Italy were



heirs to the Renaissance and antiquity and, though they may have won some emancipation, they took over their doctrines and drew inspiration from their works, modifying them to contemporary needs, for they were interpreters of an age when the ritualism of religion combined with a desire to display its power and its magnificence. They paid homage to the secular power whose victories, in the service of God, could only enhance His glory. It is impossible to believe that England with her close bonds with the Continent could have been untouched by these trends which were so characteristic of Europe in the seventeenth century.

Furthermore, England, if any country in Europe, had recourse to Italian artists, and—to recall a very wise saying of Bernini—‘you can’t call people in and not ask them to do what they know how to do’. There were, too, some aspects of the extraordinarily varied complex of English history that led inevitably to Baroque interpretation. Certain English princes had carried their pride of blood and their determination to make their royal residences magnificent just as far as the French monarchy. With varying chances of ever being successful, this remained the aim of the Stuarts. Under Queen Anne the mystique of monarchy was once more brought to life, though she never dared to provoke either Parliament or people. True enough, there had been the Revolution, a spread of Puritanism, the rise of an increasingly powerful working class, and technical science had gained much ground—all of which might have been expected to have an adverse effect on the arts. But it was those very same factors that had increased England’s wealth and power, a power which the nation felt instinctively and wished to celebrate.

Queen Anne’s reign—which saw the completion of St Paul’s and of Greenwich—was also a time of great church buildings. One might almost look upon these as votive churches, built out of gratitude for the protection God had granted England. It was, in a way, an Indian summer of Baroque lingering on, paradoxically enough, into the reign of the first Hanoverian.<sup>21</sup> One must acknowledge that in this phase, just as before, there were limitations, for England could not, any more than France, wholeheartedly surrender to the Baroque taste. The reasons, however, were quite different. In France there was a definite desire, at least in some circles, to establish a new canon of art worthy of the glory of the reign and of French supremacy—something that would be so clearly defined that it might command universal acceptance, and though not a copy of antique models would, in its own right, command as wide an acknowledgment as they had done. Sense must be linked with sensibility; if passion were the theme it was preferable to expound it lucidly rather than let lyricism get the upper hand, for if it did, imagination would run riot and the result be so chaotic that it could not be called a work of art. It was Classicism—not without some touch of Baroque, which could and sometimes did fuse with the academic by an odd chance—but it was a Classicism which looked for reason and reasonableness, for credibility and intelligence, in works of art.

In England the reasons why Baroque was inhibited were quite different. There was no question of a rigid theory. The opposition to Baroque arose much more from the national character. The religious feeling in England and its open hostility to Roman Catholicism went deep, so deep that any hope of a popular religion appealing to the masses through the cult of saintly images or a belief in intercession by the saints was a vain one. And it was precisely these that, in other countries, had fostered the feeling for Baroque. In England the majority of the population were more concerned with the material aspects of life: they were industrious, and had little sympathy with something they would have called showy or for anything imaginative compared with practical deeds. The native English tradition was also so strong that it was difficult for foreign novelties to find much backing: the adherence to the medieval was strong and stubborn. So the Baroque, except in the few cases when it expressed a national feeling—in the building of St Paul's, Greenwich, and possibly Blenheim—remained essentially an aristocratic taste.

When Colin Campbell preached the authority of Palladio and Inigo Jones, he was voicing a general distrust of anything ostentatious or complicated and a preference for something that was rational, easy to understand and probably more comfortable to live in.

A second generation of the English aristocracy which continued to make the Grand Tour was perhaps best exemplified by Lord Burlington, but the accent here is definitely in favour of the antique and the Classicism of the Renaissance. That may, of course, have been due to the inevitable revolt of one generation against its predecessor, though it seems more probably due to their inability to understand the qualities of the Baroque masters: their bravura in drawing, their use of colour and their ingenuity. Certainly there was a complete indifference to the religious or intellectual background which had made such works possible. It was at the same time that English literature became, under Pope and Addison, correct and classical.

Though both its social structure and its religious outlook barred England from being one of those countries where we can say that Baroque really flourished, one cannot deny that she was fully aware of that great Mediterranean movement, and embodied its style and feeling in buildings which add greatly to modern European civilization.



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## CHAPTER IX

# *Central Europe*

WE have seen how Baroque and Classicism in France were usually in two hostile camps, though sometimes we find them in alliance, and how the Baroque had spread even across to England. But the one region where it became really dominant is Central Europe. The Czechoslovakian author, Ferdinand Peroutka, wrote 'If we see somewhere a landscape with a small Baroque country house, we are apt to think "What a typical Czechoslovakian scene!"' This sounds a very simple remark, but it is profoundly true and especially so when one remembers the date it was written,<sup>1</sup> and it also shows how penetrating an observer Peroutka was, for he was writing in the period between the two wars, when the Baroque was almost universally dismissed as being quite incapable of expressing any aspect of the spirit or civilization of the Czechoslovakian countries. He dared to proclaim how characteristic of his native land Baroque was. Yet the same might with equal justification have been said by a Pole, a South German, an Austrian or a Hungarian.

What, then, is Central Europe? It sounds a vague term, but it is indeed an accurate one if we are considering the essence of a civilization which was spread across all the incoherent and often shifting national and racial frontiers. The one link is the Danube, the river which Bernini had so aptly chosen to symbolize Europe in the fountain he built in the Piazza Navona. But it is not just by following the course of the river up or down stream that Mediterranean culture spread northwards to these regions. The fords over the Danube play a more important part in determining the pattern. Coming up through the defiles of the Italian Alps, the valley of the Danube or the river itself might be used until a route to the north could be found through the mountainous plateau which led to the great plains of Germany and Poland, or of the Ukraine and Russia. To the east lay Hungary, which had always been a human melting-pot, quite different from the more closely-knit and more powerful western states. It was only the abstract exaggerations of intellectuals or politicians that could pretend to find a land there that should exclusively belong to any one race—a *Deutschtum* or an outpost of Pan-Slavism.

Germans and Slavs were, of course, aware of their differences: from time to time they became most insistent upon their right to retain their

separate languages and racial characteristics. Yet sometimes, especially in Bohemia, their day-to-day life, when they worked together and often were influenced by the same trends of thought, banished the question of race altogether, at least in some classes.

It is quite wrong to look for a Slav Baroque or a German Baroque if we wish to explain this great historic and artistic movement that has left behind such a rich inheritance—magnificent Baroque churches and rustic chapels, great palaces and peasant cottages. Both Germans and Slavs commissioned them; German and Slav artists designed them; equally important, the skilled body of craftsmen, the actual builders and decorators without whom nothing could have been achieved at all, was also composed of Germans and Slavs.

Certainly we cannot hope to understand the various phases of this Central European Baroque and the great originality of some of its aspects if we do not look at the historical background. As for it being a wave of Baroque surging up from Italy and submerging the native cultures, nothing could be farther from the truth. Italian models were welcomed and adopted. In some cases new styles were evolved outside the main Baroque tradition, that could reflect more markedly local feelings and social backgrounds.

Also the earlier traditions were still unforgotten: the Flamboyant style (which German art historians call '*Spatgotik*' and claim as a peculiarly Germanic manifestation), or the German Renaissance style which had expressed so well the pride of the wealthy market towns such as Ulm or Nuremberg.

However, since we are dealing with the seventeenth century, the two supremely important factors are those which we have already analysed—the Counter-Reformation, and the demographic and social changes that were a result of the Thirty Years' War. The whole of Central Europe had been convulsed and had, almost in its entirety, to be rebuilt. But since there was no question and no possibility of it being a single state, this reconstruction was haphazard and could follow no general plan. The concept of the Empire was still there and was sometimes a dynamic force which historians are apt to underestimate, but it had no administrative bodies able to coerce or exercise a restraining influence.

There was no clear and overall policy: there was no Richelieu, Olivares, or Cromwell<sup>2</sup> to impose his will, nor any active rule such as that exercised by the Dutch patricians. It was a conglomeration of great country estates where the authority of the local squire was paramount. He might break up some of his land into peasant holdings, but the greater part remained his to exploit and the management of the whole was dependent on his whims. Though this exploitation resulted in capitalism, it was still the great estates that formed the social pattern and for a great part of the century any great development was hindered by the economic slump. And even when development got under way later on, new problems arose which sadly impaired efficiency. The absence of the bourgeoisie has been



exaggerated till quite recently, or rather notice has been drawn to the small proportion or absence of an independent bourgeoisie such as could be found in the West.<sup>3</sup> But though the social structure was more varied than historians were prepared to believe even a short time ago, society remained on the whole rural. Even if its products found widespread markets, the outlook of the people was still restricted to a narrow horizon and their way of life contrasted strongly with urban life in Western Europe.

It was a society where Catholicism, with the backing of kings and nobles, spread its hold rapidly and efficiently, though not quite so easily as it once appeared. But its ritual and its splendours brought relief to the monotony of an agrarian life and the peasant majority found in it consolation. Though there was no drying up of intellectual activity, and especially in Poland we find centres of study, these countries as a whole were not favourable to the spread of knowledge. As a result it was the plastic arts that became predominant, while both music and painting were more widespread in their appeal than books or laboratories.

These are, very briefly stated, the fundamental conditions which we must remember if we wish to explain this great Baroque movement.<sup>4</sup>

It would be wrong to begin such an explanation without first pointing out the great part played by Venice in the elaboration of Baroque and in ensuring its success in Central Europe. Its influence lasted throughout the seventeenth century, and later, when it seemed that artists no longer turned to Venice for their models or inspiration, it still exercised a considerable indirect influence.

We have seen how Félibien compared Rome and Venice when he was discussing the resources which the French artists, sculptors and architects might expect to find in either city. He pointed out that Venice had few antiquities or works in the Roman style; while Rome itself, apart from its Renaissance and Baroque masterpieces, offered a perpetual lesson in Classicism, which Venice could not boast.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand the general splendour of Venetian art was in tune with the spirit of Baroque.

Also, the nearness of Venice to the Danubian countries remained a constant attraction from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century to visitors from Central Europe, who found it so much easier to reach than Rome. They remained as long as they could, enchanted by the splendid works of art and no less fascinated by the busy harbour, the gay crowds and all the various resources of a city which could satisfy their curiosity or pander to their desires.<sup>6</sup>

The Emperor Rudolf, who himself was a distinguished amateur, came to Venice to buy his treasures, and it was here that one of the most famous gems of his collection—*The Feast of the Rosary* (or *The Feast of the Roses*) by Albert Dürer—was found.<sup>7</sup>

Long after what is regarded as the heyday of Venetian art, great artistic activity not only continued but took on a new lease of life. The glory of

the paintings of the sixteenth century, the superb architecture of Sansovino, Palladio and Scamozzi even today overshadow this later work: an unjust prejudice against the seventeenth century and the achievements of that great Baroque architect Baldassare Longhena (1598-1662) still remains in some circles. He was a contemporary of Bernini and Borromini, but his work is quite independent of theirs. He was a pupil of Scamozzi and worked with him on the Procuratie Nuove, which he later completed.

But after he had settled down in Venice when he was nearly twenty, he never left the city and spent the next sixty years working there. It is absolutely wrong to accuse him of being unfaithful to his predecessors or to think that his work is not in harmony with its surroundings.

The Santa Maria della Salute, which was begun in 1632, is one of the most enchanting buildings ever erected [141]. The majesty of the dome is incomparable: the volutes rising from the drum look like gigantic marble wheels poised above the edge of the water, and the porticoes round the octagonal base of the church are like so many façades presented to us from different angles. In its vigour and elegance the Salute is one of the most successful creations of the Baroque age. It has often been contrasted with the Renaissance buildings nearby, but any attentive observer will see that as a matter of fact they have some things in common. The dome only echoes on a vast scale those of the Palladian churches, the Redentore and San Giorgio Maggiore, while the porticoes are in the tradition of Sansovino. One might truthfully say that here was the beginning of a new style, but one could not say that it was decadent. The whole building with its studied elegance and theatrical effects is the expression of a new spirit. The plan of the Salute certainly does not possess that unity of design maintained by Longhena's predecessors and by the Roman Baroque architects' mastery. The great octagonal church crowned by the dome is in fact nothing but an immense ante-room to the sanctuary. The altar in the choir is placed on the axis of the main entrance and is visible at once. One may either walk straight up to it, or reach it by following the corridor that runs round the octagonal walls with their side-chapels. The choir itself is in the form of a cross whose arms end in rounded apses and, with its own cupola, it forms a building on its own. Once this is realized the complexity of the exterior becomes intelligible.

But the relationship between the great dome, this dome over the choir and the volutes over the ambulatory and the campaniles, shows not only how ingenious and subtle an artist Longhena could be, but that the contemporary theatre, with its elaborate stage machinery, had inspired him with a taste for the surprising. It was by playing about with the traditional elements of the Renaissance that he produced this powerful and original monument.

Venetian Baroque has other masterpieces besides the Salute. The church of San Moïse, built by Alessandro Tremignon in 1668, has an astonishing



façade with a gigantic portal of four columns which are linked together by garlands of foliage [142]. They are also profusely decorated with animals, motifs and busts, which we find also used at Santa Maria Zobenigo.

There are two palaces built by Longhena himself: the Palazzo Pesaro, with its remarkable rustication, and the Rezzonico [143]. This was the last work built by the master, and its two storeys of colonnades (the third was added by Massari in the eighteenth century) give an attractive feeling of grandeur compared to the lightness of the fifteenth century patrician domestic style.

The grand staircase of Longhena's (1644) in the monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore, with its spacious landings, combines grace and solemnity. The Baroque tradition continued into the eighteenth century, and from 1715-29 we find the interior of the Assunta, a Jesuit church, being decorated with an astonishing masterpiece of *trompe l'oeil* where inlaid marble and stucco make the columns appear to be hung with Genoese velvet and the pulpit to be enveloped in drapery. The high altar itself is under a magnificent canopy with twisted columns. Another noteworthy achievement is the façade of the Gesuiti carried out in the colossal order, which leads on to an ingeniously and harmoniously designed nave. The vaulting was later decorated by Tiepolo.

Venice was also, during these years, taking the lead in the world of music. Already Italy had revolutionized this art by laying an increasing stress on instrumental music at the expense of polyphony, and the composers accorded a greater role to the organ and the viols, which ranged from the small violin which was held against the chin while playing, to the leg viol (*da gamba*) that was later ousted by the violoncello. It did not of course mean that the human voice played no part. Even if polyphony no longer dominated everything, arias were still in great favour, especially if they gave an opportunity to the *castrati* or sopranos to display their virtuosity. The new forms of the cantata, and, after 1637, of the opera, were particularly liked by the Venetians; we have already seen how greatly the public enjoyed all the ingenious stage effects and sudden transformation scenes which became characteristic of operatic performances. The parishes of San Graziano, SS. Giovanni e Paulo, and San Moise had their respective theatres, and there was another one called the Novissimo. Monteverdi also composed a remarkable Venetian opera *Le Coronazione di Poppea*, which marked a new phase in his style.

Cavalli, who was to become the great master of this genre, had sung as a boy in the choir of San Marco, which could also claim Vivaldi, the father of the famous composer, as one of its members. It was doubtless this great efflorescence in the theatrical and musical worlds that attracted artists to Venice from all over Europe; it was here, for example, that Inigo Jones came when he was training to become a decorator.

Because of their relative proximity, Venice and Vienna had always been in constant touch and the links between them were strengthened when, at

the end of the Thirty Years' War, the Emperor took up residence in Vienna which therefore became, more or less, the capital of Central Europe and thus a city avid for entertainment.

The Emperor Leopold sent a Bohemian nobleman, Cernin de Chudenic, as ambassador to Venice, where he stayed from 1660 to 1663. He and the Emperor were personal friends, and in a steady flow of letters the ambassador describes the unending series of fêtes, the plays on at the theatres, the musical performances and the outstanding quality of the musicians. It was a description of a civilization incomparably richer and more varied than could be found in any of the Hapsburg states. Though Venice was not the only source from which Central Europe drew artistic inspiration, it was to her more than to any other city that it owed its Baroque characteristics; it was from her that it learnt to put aesthetic values above all others and to prefer the pleasures of sight and sound to those of disputation or the study of austere learned treatises. That airy grace, of which Vienna eventually learnt the secret, was also for the most part derived from Baroque Venice.

Later on, though still in Leopold's reign, Venice again influenced the art of Central Europe, though this time it was by a strangely circuitous route, through Rome. Andrea Pozzo, who was to become famous as an architect and decorator, was born at Trento in 1642. He became a humble brother in the Society of Jesus, and this was perhaps one reason why, when he was thirty-nine, he was summoned to Rome by Father Oliva; but by this time his taste and artistic tenets had already been formed by the Venetian school. He arrived in Rome just in time to help Baciccio—perhaps the artist nearest to Bernini in spirit—and then to continue his work. At this time work had been resumed on the church of Sant Ignazio where Pozzo was entrusted with the decoration of the ceiling. Without any use of stucco, he managed to make the interior seem more spacious by superb use of *trompe l'oeil* [V]. Now that it seemed certain that the cupola would never be built, Pozzo painted a great architectural composition in perspective. The nave appears to soar up to a dazzling heaven where St Ignatius is shown at the moment his heart is struck by a ray from God's own heart. Its brilliant light illumines figures symbolic of the four quarters of the earth which fill the four corners of the composition.<sup>8</sup> The vault of the apse was decorated with columns framing a vista of the sky which served as a setting for the miracles of St Ignatius.

Finally Pozzo was responsible for the extraordinary reredos that frames the altar of St Ignatius in the Gesù [144]. Here the columns and the globe of lapis lazuli are in perfect harmony with the fresco that had been painted by Baciccio and attain a sumptuousness which even the fervid imagination of Cardinal Farnese could not surpass. Here Pozzo used bronze and precious stones to give permanent form to the decorations which the Jesuits in Rome used to place on the altar during the forty hours of prayer in honour of the Holy Eucharist.<sup>9</sup>



For Pozzo, perspective was the secret of everything in painting or architecture or sculpture. That he had great technical skill is obvious, but it was his absolute genius for invention that was so astonishing, and it was due to him that the Baroque received a new lease of life just at the time when one might have expected it to enter into a decline. His ingenuity and his taste for the unusual and the refined led him away from the severe line and straightforward plan to discover affinities between his style and that of Borromini. He had neither the originality nor the depth of that great artist, but he stimulated a new interest in Borromini's work a quarter of a century after his death. The curve, and the interplay of convex and concave volumes now won supremacy over the beautiful and monumental use of line by Bernini. Indeed, though there is no direct link between them, the palaces of Longhena seem to have something reminiscent of Bernini about them. It may have been that Longhena and Bernini were more directly heirs to the Renaissance, or that both were primarily architects while Pozzo was chiefly a painter, though he also had pretensions to being a theorist. His great work, *Prospettiva de' pittori e architetti*, which firmly subordinates architecture to painting, was published in two volumes in 1693. It ran into several editions and in the same year was translated into Latin, which ensured its distribution throughout Europe. In 1700 it was translated into both German and French.

When he was summoned to Vienna by the Emperor, Pozzo was able to reinforce his theories by practical examples, and we shall later see how great his contribution to Central European Baroque was, even though his activity lasted but a few years. The date of his arrival in Vienna was one when Baroque was at its peak; but before reaching that there were many halts by the wayside and it is best to describe these now.

People are apt to ask when the first signs of Baroque appeared in Central Europe. It really leads us nowhere to ask the question in this form. Some historians like to quote the date 1611,<sup>10</sup> and in support of this, point out the fine porch built by the Emperor Mathias for the Hradcany palace, when Prague was still the Imperial seat. It probably comes from the atelier of Scamozzi and is decorated with a pediment and two pyramids. But its strict observance of classical principles and its perfect regularity surely do not entitle it to be called Baroque? It is one of many examples of work imported from Italy after the Renaissance by princes or great nobles to embellish their palaces. A few steps away there is the charming belvedere of Queen Anne (*née* Jagellon), which had been erected sixty years before and was also, at least in part, the work of an Italian, Paolo della Stella, to whom the fine Florentine colonnade is attributed. A little farther on is the tennis court (Micovna) which is obviously Palladian in inspiration and was built by the German architect Wohlmüt in 1552. Then again, wherever the Jesuits and the Counter-Reformation had spread we find churches repeating the style of Vignola. This may perhaps be looked on as a prepara-

tion for Baroque, but it is more likely to be a continuation of Italian influence which began in the time of the Renaissance.

Before Baroque could be introduced, the existing order had to be profoundly shaken up by the Thirty Years' War, a revolutionary crisis which endangered the whole of the Counter-Reformation, and the political pattern of the Bohemian kingdom with the three Estates (Bohemia and the European provinces, the Alpine and Danubian provinces, and Hungary) which had acknowledged the sovereign since 1526. The social and economic structure was now shattered from top to bottom, though no doubt the changes that became so apparent during and after the Thirty Years' War had begun before.

The working of the mines during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had made Bohemia the most economically advanced of the Imperial States and here we can see important changes taking place towards the end of the sixteenth century—the constant decline of the royal towns, of the artisans' guilds, and of the lesser nobility, and the increasing power of the large estates, which were exploited with profit by the great landowners. But these changes were taking place gradually and almost unnoticeably until everything was changed by those sombre and tragic years from 1618 to 1648, years that engulfed a whole generation. Central Europe became a mass of ruins, overrun and pillaged by armies of mercenaries. More than once each side faced imminent disaster.

The Imperial victory of the White Mountain in 1620 saved both Church and Emperor, and Catholics celebrated the rout of the Protestants by building votive churches—Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome, Panna Maria Vitezná in Prague, and the University Church in Vienna. Nevertheless the struggle still went on for another thirty years, and the fortunes of war continued to vary.

The Emperor, for all that he bore the greatest title in Christendom, remained a weak prince. The territories he held were only isolated islands of security—and how relative that security was. The Turkish army, halted along an arbitrary line in Hungary, might renew their assault at any moment. Germany refused to obey him. In Bohemia he could only maintain power by depleting the Treasury to find enough money to buy the loyalty of the nobles, and by granting the great magnates concessions that made them actually into small principalities he could no longer directly control. The decline of the population was due not so much to the casualties of war as to epidemics that came in its wake and the trek of refugees out of the devastated areas. Traditional values collapsed, since the intellectuals and many of the nobility who had upheld them were now in exile.

Yet in the midst of the general chaos there stood out some surprisingly successful men, such as Wallenstein, whose adventurous career marks a turning point in the history of the Baroque. He has too often been called 'a condottiere of Czech origin', but in a few years he had established himself as the most important man in the kingdom, the only one whom both





141 The placing of the domes and belltowers of the Church of the Madonna della Salute in Venice are the expression of the scholarly ingenuity of Longhena, whose taste for the unexpected stemmed from his familiarity with stage devices





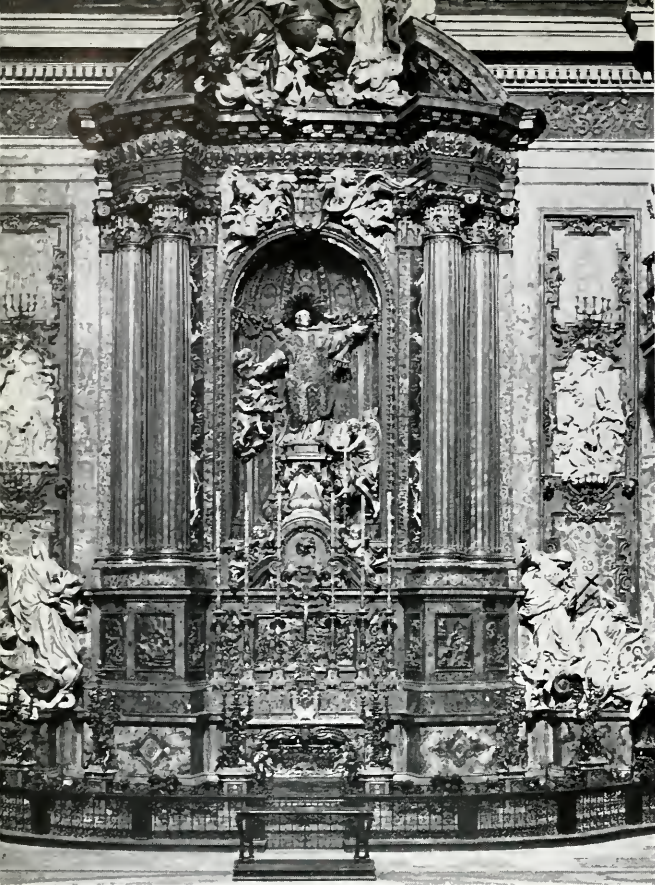




**143** Longhena's last work, the Palazzo Rezzonico, is characterized by a pleasing grandeur instead of the lightness of the patrician mansions of the fifteenth century

LEFT. The astonishing façade of San Moïse, by Tremignon, has a huge door with four columns and is ornamented with a profusion of figures of animals, carved details and busts





**144** ABOVE LEFT. The fantastic altarpiece of Sant Ignazio, in the church of the Gesù, is by Pozzo. Combined with Baciccio's fresco it creates an impression of richness that even Cardinal Farnese could not have bettered





BELOW LEFT. An archaic reversion to the Palladian style of the beginning of the eighteenth century. With its great scale, Masari's façade for the church of the Gesuati is an attempt to harmonize with the monuments of Venice

ABOVE RIGHT. The 'sala terrena' (or loggia) is as high as the rest of the Wallenstein Palace, Prague. Spezza has given it three great arches supported by pairs of Doric columns and their entablatures



147 The French architect, Jean-Baptiste Mathey, built a church with a centred plan for the Knights of the Cross, in Prague. It has a classical gravity, recalling Bramante's placid churches





Karel Skřéta, from Prague, spent eight or ten years in Italy. On his return, the concrete quality of the genius of his native land won him over again, and in this picture of *St Wenceslas* he subordinates his Italian technique to a different inspiration





- 149 *Il Pomo d'Oro* was a play with music by the Italian Cesti, for which the Emperor Leopold composed a number of arias and for which, in 1688, Burnacini  
 150 designed the décor. BELOW: The apotheosis of Leopold I





the inhabitants and the exiles looked upon as capable of restoring peace, and possibly peace throughout the Empire.<sup>11</sup> He was a magnificent figure, and determined to live in a splendour that was worthy of him and a demonstration of his power. On his Friedland estates—a veritable little principality he had managed to carve out for himself in northern Bohemia—he built the Chartreuse of Valdice. In Prague he bought up a whole district at the north-west end of the Malá Strana, razed all the old houses and within four years, between 1625 and 1629, had built himself one of the finest palaces of the age.

The work was controlled by his counsellor Pieroni and built from plans prepared by three Italians, whose names alone have survived: Andrea Spezza,<sup>12</sup> Marini, and Campione. The long façade without pilasters is reminiscent of an Italian Renaissance palace and only the attic windows show a German influence. But the interior is unalloyed Italian. A huge ballroom, decorated with pilasters of the colossal order, rises two storeys high. The fresco on the ceiling was carried out by Baccio Bianco and shows Mars—a portrait of Wallenstein—being borne up to heaven by a quadriga.

Two storeys are also taken up by the chapel at one end of the palace. In the centre of the great reredos with twisted columns surmounting the altar, there is a painting of St Wenceslas by the German artist Sheemuller, and the same saint is again portrayed in the murals by Baccio Bianco. If Wallenstein had celebrated his secular fame in his ballroom by the mythological apotheosis of Mars, he here seems to be striving to identify himself with the old religious traditions of Bohemia. It is in this chapel that we hear, as it were, the first notes of a mighty hymn to St Wenceslas that can be heard throughout Czech Baroque, echoed by the statues, the reredos paintings and the sacred plays staged in the Jesuit colleges. Lastly there is a *sala terrena* as high as the main building, whose three huge arches supported by twin Doric columns and their entablature open on to the garden [146]. Its interior is both luxurious and graceful, with stucco panels, shell-encrusted niches, pilasters, and with its lunettes and ceiling decorated with frescoes.<sup>13</sup>

One should try to imagine this palace filled with the bronze statues by the Flemish artist de Vries, which are now in Sweden, and countless other treasures that were pillaged, and then one can realize how grand this first Bohemian Baroque masterpiece was, how novel in style and superb in quality and self-assurance. Arne Novák once wondered what impression it could have made on the people of Prague who saw it abandoned and deserted during those long years between the tragic death of Wallenstein and the signing of peace (1634–48), a symbol, as it were, of '*sic transit gloria mundi*'.

The Peace of Westphalia was signed even while the Swedish armies were besieging the bridge in Prague—proof, if any were needed, of how precarious the Imperial victory was and how all might still lie on the turn of a

card. Still, now that the Empire and the Emperor's lands were no longer engaged in the struggle, the Peace began a new era which saw the birth and development of a Baroque civilization that was to last for a hundred years. The variety, quality and originality of its masterpieces entitle it to a special place in the history of modern times.

The Peace made it possible to establish a new order. This was, to be sure, imposed by the victors (how could it be otherwise?) but it was not carried out all at once nor on the lines of any clearly conceived ideal. It came little by little as circumstances permitted, continually adapting itself to local necessities and because of them acquiring distinct characteristics.<sup>14</sup>

It may be said that three authorities were re-established—the sovereign, the Church, and the lord of the manor. Supporting each other, they give the impression of forming a dictatorial and hierarchical society in which the workers, though not enslaved, were submissive and attendant upon the orders of their superiors for their every action.

The Emperor inspired respect by virtue of his office. He was the representative and lieutenant of God on earth, the father of all his subjects and enjoyed usufruct over all the *Landesvater* kingdoms. Since 1627 the crown of Bohemia had become hereditary, as it was in the Danubian and Alpine provinces. The nobles were his vassals; the Church taught obedience to him as a divine precept—and yet, in spite of all this, the Emperor could not raise as much money as a French king, either for official or personal expenditure. His army consisted of mercenaries led by foreign officers, and their pay had to be sanctioned by the Diets. Even had he wished to build in the grand manner—a taste that had ruined many of the Italian princes—he had not the means to do so. He could not maintain a brilliant court, nor pursue the policy of a strong monarch. The Hradcany palace in Prague and the Hofburg in Vienna both remained medieval. Not until 1660, when the artist-prince Leopold I began his reign, do we see any court programme such as we expect from a Baroque king.

The Church now enjoyed absolute authority. The bishops had been re-instated in their dioceses; their castles and estates had been restored to them. The old religious orders (such as the Benedictines, Premonstratensians, Cistercians and Augustines) were re-established. New orders of men and of women (such as the Jesuits, Ursulines or nuns of the Visitation Order) received the highest patronage when they began their apostolates. Both had to begin practically from the beginning. The demoralization of the peasantry seems to have increased as their numbers diminished, and ignorance and superstition dominated the rural areas.

The general state of chaos was so great that in some districts it seemed to the Church to present a more serious challenge than the attraction of Protestantism. A great evangelistic effort had to be made but with means suited to the circumstances, a dialectic that sought to capture the emotions rather than convince the mind, that tried to foster hope, and to make something consoling out of pious habits that might eventually lead to true



faith. How misleading the chronology of historians can be, with the Counter-Reformation considered as a sixteenth-century movement, when here in the middle of the seventeenth century we find that everything had to be undertaken again almost from scratch throughout Central Europe.

The third great power and authority in the land was the great land-owners. To understand the problem it is not worth considering, except from a purely political point of view, the influx of foreigners who, either by royal grant or purchase, obtained large estates in Bohemia and Austria, and later on in Hungary. Their number is considerable, but not overwhelming. If we take Bohemia in 1664 we find amongst the high aristocracy fifty-eight Czech families and ninety-five newcomers, but if we survey the country as a whole we find three-fifths of the land still in the possession of the old nobility. The economic system played a much more important part. There were the difficulties which confronted any free landowner who had not enough money to improve his estates or make investments; in return for any concessions an extension of villein labour on the nobleman's land was demanded, or if the land were held on lease, all the old seignorial rights, levies and monopolies were enforced by the great magnate throughout their demesnes. Yet the tax on beer in the towns (small cities of three to five thousand souls) would alone bring in more than the whole income derived from the land.<sup>15</sup>

The system guaranteed a quick fortune for the nobility, provided, of course, that their bailiffs were honest and they themselves not reckless spendthrifts. Moreover, it gave a certain margin of security to the rural population, where the standard of living definitely improved. The land belonged to the noble, and society was patriarchal, but it should not be forgotten that the nobleman might also be a churchman. An abbot, who was usually of noble birth, might be only the usufructuary of his possessions and the rents flowed into the monastic community which could then afford to build churches and monasteries. This is one factor that explains the splendour of the great abbeys built in the eighteenth century.

This century of Baroque civilization may be divided into two periods. The first lasted about thirty years, during which the population increased and became more conscious of themselves, while the ruling classes consolidated their power. The artistic inspiration still came mainly from Italy and so did the artists themselves. But, especially in religious art, the foreign style was used to interpret local traditions and legends: technical and aesthetic skills were adopted to express the native feeling of the country.

The second period is quite different. A general increase in wealth led to more buildings being commissioned. Between the peoples of the Imperial lands there was a growing kinship, and the Hapsburg dynasty was now accepted without question; successes such as the Emperor's victory over the Turks in 1683 increased this solidarity. Also there were now many more skilled native artisans and artists apart from some great German masters in architecture, painting and sculpture. All these circumstances

combined to produce a very individual style of Baroque—involved, grandiose and graceful—which was distinct from that of any other land and a proof that at this date the Austrian countries shared a common civilization.

It remained a civilization that expressed itself through the plastic arts and music; it never evolved a language held in common by all the people it embraced, nor did it satisfy their intellectual needs, but though this problem is of great importance in the history of Europe, it hardly concerns us here.

We see, then, that the most striking thing about the first period is the preponderance of Italians amongst the architects, masons and painters. We come across a wealth of foreign names, but only one or two German or Czech ones. In Prague, there are Lurago and Caratti: in Vienna, the Carlone, Luchese and Tencala. Some are first-class masters, but the majority show themselves to be only skilled adaptors or copyists of the Italian manner, especially in the field of ecclesiastical architecture. Their lay buildings retain many characteristics of the German Renaissance, such as the use of flat, sober façades. The change comes slowly and cautiously.

Are there, one may ask, many notable differences between the development in Vienna and Bohemia? Bohemia itself has been the subject of many a fertile debate. Even now this region is still one of the richest in Baroque. Prague's main charm lies in its Baroque monuments and some quarters of the city, especially the Malá Strana district on the left bank with its palaces, gardens and churches, are remarkably unspoilt and harmonious.

In the country, the votive column or fountain that adorns the town square, the churches with their onion steeples, the spacious white manor houses, the inevitable picture or statue of St John Nepomuk on the bridges, or the flowing lines of the great series of sculptures at Kuks—all the sophisticated graces of Baroque seem an integral part of the landscape here.

Paradoxically enough this period of great artistic effort is also the most sombre one in Czech history. The nation seemed to be enslaved by a foreign aristocracy and it was this fact that led nineteenth-century historians to deny any link between Baroque art and the Czech nation. They thought that since the nation was essentially Slav in origin, since, from Jan Hus to Luther, it had favoured the Reformation and the Calvinistic United Brotherhood, it could not have been prepared to welcome a style that was Catholic and Italianate. Therefore, they argued, it must have been imposed upon the people by a foreign aristocracy and clergy backed up by the military power of Germany and Vienna. By shaking off this yoke the Czech nation began to find itself.

A later theory argues that it was actually in Baroque that the Czech people found, after all the reverses and humiliations of the Thirty Years' War, a renewal of hope and strength. It renewed memories of the distant past and the early medieval Czech saints, St Wenceslas and St Ludmilla. It



maintained the feeling for the traditional that lay deep in a peasant population profoundly attached to its native land.

Many writers, aware of the beauty of Baroque, admit that the aspirations of the Czech soul, its grief and its hopes, found expression in this imaginative and idealistic style. Finally in our own day other historians, though still admitting 'the undeniable beauty' of this artistic heritage, offer a Marxist-Leninist solution to the problem.<sup>16</sup>

The 'pathetic' character of Baroque art in Bohemia is now seen to be the expression of a social struggle. Those who expressed themselves through this art were engaged in the general conflict of the time and torn at heart. They have therefore multiplied the contrasting effects between mass and space, between movement and rest and between light and shade. Everything is engaged in a dramatic struggle. Nowhere is calm possible, nor harmony, nor serenity. It is alleged that some artists broke through the limitations imposed on them and, by a truer rendering of the national genius, managed, even at the height of the Baroque period, to lay foundations of a democratic art which developed later. Other artists submitted to the ruling classes and debased their personal talents to produce the superficialities demanded of them.

The great variety of interpretations is enough by itself to prove the historical importance of the Baroque in Bohemia; nor is it without interest that the Leninist-Marxist theory, materialistic though it may be, shows more sympathy with Baroque than the utterly negative view adopted by the Liberal historians of the nineteenth century. But there is no possible doubt that here was a flowering of religious and aristocratic art which produced some superb masterpieces.

The Michna were a family who had grown rich in the service of the Emperor, but they were so ambitious to play the role of Maecenas that within two generations they were ruined. But at least their lavish patronage helped to complete the church of San Salvador, the chapel of the Jesuit College or Clementinum. The Jesuits had settled in Prague in the middle of the sixteenth century, were expelled during the Revolution of 1619, and were re-established after the Imperial victory at the White Mountain. They may well be proud of this fine church, which is admirably situated at the end of the old town in front of the bridge across the Vltava. That the design wished to recall the Roman churches of the Counter-Reformation is obvious, with the nave with chapels and tribunes set in the thickness of the walls, the octagonal drum at the crossing of the transept to support a cupola, and characteristic stucco decoration. For the exterior, Carlo Lurago built a two-storeyed façade enlivened with Corinthian pilasters, and in front he placed a three-arched peristyle. It gives a charming effect and it was also useful for processions, while the terrace above it is perfectly placed for blessing the crowd. The river front looks across to the Malá Strana and the Hradcany Palace. The Italian architect has certainly man-

aged to give the church an importance greater than that originally intended and it is an essential element in the landscape of the city. It was built (1648-51) fifteen years before the baldacchino in St Peter's, ten years before Borromini had built San Carlino, and is contemporary with Sant' Agnese. It has none of the boldness of Roman High Baroque, and seems closer to the tradition of Vignola.

A few years later we find Humprecht-Jan Cernin, the same Cernin who had been Imperial ambassador in Venice and Rome—following Wallenstein's example of building on the grand scale. But the palace he built on the Hradcany Hill was even more imposing and sumptuous than that of the Duke of Friedland. The architect was Francesco Carrati, who designed a superbly magnificent façade of thirty half-columns of the colossal order which rests on a rusticated basement storey (1669-87). It looks like the palace of an Italian prince rather than that of a Bohemian noble, but then it was built for a man who had visited Venice, Verona, Mantua and Rome and who knew Roman Baroque at first hand. On the garden front the two loggias flanked by large pavilions remind one of the Villa Medici. The roof is scarcely visible, a sign that to follow Italian taste was considered more important than to cope with the local climate. The transplantation, as it were, of buildings from Rome to Prague went on until 1673, when the Archbishop of Prague, John Frederick of Wallenstein (a descendant of the great Duke of Friedland) brought back an architect called Jean-Baptiste Mathey (1630-95) from Rome. He was a Burgundian by birth and one of the many French artists who had settled in Italy. He was commissioned to build the church of St Francis of Assisi for the Knights of the Cross on a site not far from San Salvador, at the entrance to the Charles bridge [147]. It has a central plan and is hardly more than a large chapel. The exterior in the form of a Greek cross is decorated by Doric pilasters alternating with rustication. The drum, resting on vigorous twin columns, supports a beautiful, finely sweeping oval cupola. The whole building is of admirable quality and has a classical solemnity about it that recalls the calm churches of Bramante. This Classicism has nothing to do with the French origin of the architect. The idiom is pure Roman—coming direct from Baroque Rome that had preserved so many classical aspects of the Renaissance.

In other parts of Prague we find palaces in the Roman taste which Mathey built either for the archbishop or for noble clients, but they have since been altered by restoration. There is the Archbishop's Palace, the Bucquoy Palace, and the charming building now known as the Tuscan Palace, whose belvedere pavilions give it all the grace of a villa. So within thirty-five years, from 1650 to round about 1685, the city of Jan Hus was transformed by churches and palaces which were built first in the North Italian and then in the Roman style. None of this, however, shows a real trend towards urbanization. The nobles who built the palaces still relied upon their landed estates for their wealth and their power. One might think the whole of this activity artificial, or tend to dismiss Baroque as



something quite alien to the national feeling in the Czech countries, did we not find it already established in other fields.

At this time the painter who most ably interpreted Czech feeling was Karel Skréta (1610-74). He was a native of Prague, Protestant by birth, though later converted to Roman Catholicism, who spent eight or ten years of his training in Venice, Bologna and Rome before he settled down in Prague in 1638. Here he opened a studio and received commissions from the nobility and the Church. The solidity of his modelling and the warmth of his colours against deep shadow give his portraits a quality that can compare with the great masters. But his religious paintings display still more moving traits.

It was as though he were captivated again by the robust spirit of his native land and subordinated his Italian technique to an inspiration that was very far removed from anything to do with the Bolognese school. For the cloisters of Zderaz monastery he painted an admirable series of seven episodes from the life of St Wenceslas [148]. The medieval blood of the old Bohemian artists who had never stirred from their native land seems to give life to these masterly paintings and infuses them with incomparable feeling. Only a Czech who loved St Wenceslas could have shown us this native prince so fortuitously. In one picture we see him leaning over the barrels of newly-harvested grapes at Melnik, about to press some wine for the Mass. In another we see him benign and forgiving as he receives the submission of Radslav, prince of Zlicko. He is riding a thick-set white horse such as one can so well imagine coming from some Bohemian stud and plodding along the rough roads of Polabi in winter.

This feeling for rustic life is the painter's homage to the Czech countryside. But to Neumann (the Leninist-Marxist critic we have already mentioned) this is proof—together with the fact that the people are drawn from everyday life and their gestures are naturalistic—that Skréta's pre-occupation with realism was a desire to bring religious themes down to a mundane level. It is true that these pictures are a curious mixture of realism and idealism, but it is precisely that quality that is so characteristic of Baroque in the Czech countries. Looking at the face of St Wenceslas, so full of gentleness and charity, we see a Christian seeking conciliation, rather than a conqueror. And if we stand in front of the faces of those angels surrounded by a halo of light, who seem at the same time impalpable yet close to us, how can we talk of the mundane?

St Wenceslas was also the theme chosen by Johan-George Bendl, the first Czech artist who broke away from wood-carving to carve statuary (1625?-80). In his early work we find St Wenceslas standing stiffly on top of a column wreathed with vines. Later on, after his taste had developed during his stay in Italy, he carved a statue of St Wenceslas on horseback which shows a certain mastery of the difficult technical problems inherent in depicting movement. The dynamic quality he sought still eluded him—one cannot pretend that Bendl was a master. The fact, however, that he

turned to Baroque to express the traditional religious memories of Bohemia is worth remembering and possibly of more significance than his actual work.

The Catholic clergy hoped now to complete the spiritual conquest of the country. It was not only a question of training an élite in the Jesuit colleges. There was indeed no lack of learned Fathers. Those who were Czech, like the ardent Bohuslav Balbin (1621-88), nourished their patriotism by recalling the great historical past of Bohemia. In 1660 Father Steyer published the *Grammatica Bohemica*, compiled by J. Drachovsky (1577-1644) and eight years later a *Correct Method of writing and printing the Czech language*.

The task of reaching the poorest class was no less urgent, and here we may consider the interesting and revealing case of Father Bridel (1619-80) who was for a long time librarian in Prague. He was a poet writing in the manner of Angelus Silesius and Spee; he also translated Latin and French texts into Czech, though possibly for these he used German versions instead of the originals. It was he who set out to re-establish religion in the country districts and get in touch with the simple folk by teaching them prayers, hymns and the elements of the catechism. It was not easy. Though in the south the people—perhaps influenced by the monasteries—had resisted the Reformation, those in the central and western districts still insisted upon the plain Scriptures and rejected any ritualism. The missionaries sometimes found their work thwarted by bishops who were jealous of their prerogatives or by landlords who maintained that the *corvée* applied to Sundays as well as weekdays. The efforts to convert the people were not always confined to gentle persuasion: the soldiers were sometimes called in and there were *autos da fé* of Czech books, not because they were written in the vernacular but because they were considered heretical. In 1671 compulsory tickets for confession were introduced. The result was that in the '80s, which marked the beginning of a more lenient policy towards the Czech peasant, a great many of them had returned to the old faith and, in certain districts, become extremely devout.<sup>17</sup> Even those whose fathers had suffered for the reformed faith, and whose descendants would in their turn try to revive the ideals of Jan Hus and Jan Zizka, now professed Catholicism. The nation had lived through a period of untold suffering. During these years, when misery had to be endured and hope fostered, the emotions reigned supreme over any appeal to reason or abstract theory. Above all, the people sought for some consolation and happiness in their lives and they responded to the religious lessons and the outward show of Catholicism. The calvaries at the crossroads and the statues of the Virgin and the saints became part of the landscape. St John Nepomuk was there to ward off floods; St Florian protected houses from fire or lightning; St Wenceslas was venerated as the founder of independent Bohemia, and St Ludmilla, who had introduced Christianity and suffered martyrdom, was also revered. Their images became very real to the country folk and seemed al-



ways there to help them. It mattered little enough how much superstitiousness crept into this cult of saints, for the ruling classes encouraged such habits.

The nobility were also becoming more attached to their country houses. Some, like Humprecht Cernin or Count Michael Thun, built new castles, and even those who kept their old houses saw that the interior decoration was brought up to date. They showed the same enthusiasm in restoring ruined churches or building new ones. They also enjoyed the right of patronage, though their choice of a vicar was dependent on the Archbishop's approval. In the hard and monotonous life of the peasant the greatest day of the year was the feast of the local saint, which combined religious festivities and a village fête. The long winter evenings were spent in preparing for these feasts. On the day itself festive dresses were worn that had been handed down from generation to generation and were decorated with ribbons of every colour, hats trimmed with flowers, and starched, exquisitely embroidered linen worked on cloth as fine as that of the dazzling altar cloths.

There were religious processions with shining crosses and waving banners, where the lord of the manor, taper in hand, headed the column that followed the Holy Sacrament; then there were processions in honour of the Virgin in the month of May, when the late Czech spring begins; then on the feast of St John Nepomuk interminable processions in Prague from the villages nearby and from even remote districts, which wended their way to the Charles bridge, which tradition said was the spot where St John Nepomuk had been thrown into the river. These days often ended with profane amusements, village dances to the rhythm of rustic musicians (the 'dudáky'), songs and hand-clapping.

Such was the world of the Czech countryside, the world depicted in the famous novel by Božena Němcová, *Babička*, where the principal heroine is an old peasant woman who for generations remained a national symbolic figure.<sup>18</sup>

In Austria itself things ran more smoothly, for there was no latent conflict between the sovereign and the people. The rural population remained faithful to their religious traditions; St Leopold was held in much veneration and the beautiful abbey of Klosterneuburg just outside Vienna was dedicated to him; St Florian still retained all his popularity. Vienna, because of the Turkish menace, remained a fortified city so that, although it had become the capital since the Emperor had taken up his residence there, it could not expand beyond the ramparts. Some of the old churches were completely transformed and one of the most charming examples is the church Am Hof. Here Carlo Carlone had only a small space to work in, but he composed a delightful façade with a balustraded terrace above the porch, set back the main part of the building, and used two elegant pavilions to link up the church with the other buildings of the square (1662). Sometimes, as at the Schottenkirche, it was only the decorations of the

interior that were brought up to date. Other architects continued in the tradition of Vignola, whose influence is apparent in the tall façade of the Ursulines (in the Johanngasse) which terminates in a large pediment with volutes and small obelisks (1675).

Great plans were prepared for the Hofburg after the fire of 1668 had destroyed the wing that Luchese had built six years previously. In its place Johann Philip Quenzer and Domenico Carlone built the noble Leopoldinische Trakt (1672-81) which, with its twenty-five apses of three windows, crowned by consoles that are almost lost in the shadow of the jutting roof, makes a sober and majestic impression.<sup>19</sup>

One of the great aristocrats, Prince Karl-Eusebius von Liechtenstein, a great builder and collector, advised his fellow peers to make the magnificence of their palaces a point of honour amongst themselves. He recommends a long façade—the longer a building is, he said, the more pleasing it becomes—with a great many windows and columns. He is not, however, only concerned with beauty and magnificence, but also with health. He wished to see the state apartments confined to the *piano nobile* and points out that, although it is inconvenient to have to climb so many stairs, the air will be purer and more salubrious on the third floor.

In 1664 thirty-one middle-class houses had been levelled to make room for nine town houses for the nobility; but now Vienna faced the problem that had already become acute in Paris—lack of space, for both cities were bursting at the seams. The Emperor, when the hunting season or the heat of summer did not make him prefer Laxenburg, wished Vienna to be the scene of a brilliant Court life. He knew of the great Italian fiestas and French fêtes and did not want the Hapsburgs to lag behind. He also genuinely enjoyed such entertainments and was himself a musician and composer. He had his own chapel and his Court musicians.

His marriage with the Infanta Marguerita-Maria was the occasion of many festivities. There were tilting matches to a musical accompaniment; there was a theatrical piece called *La Contessa dell' Ariae dell' Acqua*, and a musical drama called *Il Pomo d'Oro* that was more complex than any opera. The composer was an Italian, Cesti, who was second Kapelmeister at the Court and one of the most accomplished musicians of the time. Some of the arias were written by the Emperor himself [149 & 150].

Though poetry was not forgotten—Almateo de Pordenone was Court poet—the overriding passion was opera. This passion grew to such an extent that between 1669 and the end of the century Franz Minato had to produce libretti for no less than a hundred and seventy operas and oratorios.<sup>20</sup>

The public began to take an increasing interest in the Emperor and his court, and the Germans were confident that he would be able to re-establish a sound economy throughout the Empire.<sup>21</sup> The Emperor, in short, began to inspire loyalty, and when he married Eleonora of Neuburg all his subjects were anxious that the dynasty should now be assured. An



Augustinian monk, Abraham a Sancta Clara, the son of a Swabian inn-keeper, was now court preacher and took upon himself to express the touching hope that inspired all the Emperor's subjects, Bohemians, Moravians and Hungarians alike. In one extraordinary lyrical flight he wishes 'their Most Gracious Majesties as much happiness as there are trees in the forest, grass in the meadows, drops of water in the fountains, rays in the sun, sands in the sea, stars in the sky, and above all he wishes them the seed of the arch-patriarch Abraham'.<sup>22</sup> The wish came true, and sons were born to the Emperor. But we can see how the Imperial idea was wrapping itself round with an atmosphere of fanatical enthusiasm which in some ways reminds us of the fervent zeal which the missionaries of the Counter-Reformation tried to arouse for the Catholic faith. No doubt it was not unanimous, and very shortly before, in 1671, a plot inspired by the Hungarian nobles had been discovered. Although they had been mercilessly punished, Hungary still remained practically ungovernable, and a land of simmering rebellion. The Bohemian nobles were less formidable because they considered their own interests to be linked with those of the Emperor, but they were none the less determined that the Imperial administration should not penetrate into their own jealously guarded domains. A Frenchman travelling through Bohemia about this time observed shrewdly enough 'Might one not say that the aristocracy hinders as much as it can the service of His Majesty, which certainly does not appear to be any too firm?'<sup>23</sup>

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## CHAPTER X

9

# *Imperial Baroque*

'*AUF, auf, ihr Christen!* Arise, arise, ye Christians!' Once more it is the trumpet voice of Abraham a Sancta Clara sounding the call. It is the summer of 1683: Transylvania and Hungary were in revolt, the Turks had seized their opportunity to press on to the gates of Vienna and trenches were hurriedly dug outside the city walls. There was already a crisis in European politics, and both the Empire and Spain were watching Louis XIV with deep anxiety. The treaties of Westphalia, of the Pyrenees, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Nimègue had given France so many advantages that its preponderance was taken for granted. Now they were being exploited to the utmost. Quoting clause after clause and protesting that he was only pleading for his rights, Louis continually claimed new territories. If there were no suitable pretext, as for the annexation of Strasbourg and Casal, he alleged necessity. He did not, he protested, want war; but he displayed his military might, and got his way, even though the fear that he was seeking universal domination increased. Where indeed could one look for help against him?

England was complacent. The Emperor could achieve something if only Germany were united behind him, but the Elector of Brandenburg, the most powerful of the German princes, provisionally advised resignation. And now came this Turkish menace in the East. If Vienna should fall it meant that the way lay open to the heart of the Empire. The Pope, Innocent XI, became so alarmed that he admonished all Christian princes and begged them to realize that Christianity itself was in danger, that it was the Crescent against the Cross, the Cross which was the symbol of Rome but also of the Protestants and the Orthodox. The first to realize the danger was Poland, for her own territories also lay open to a Turkish attack. King John Sobieski signed a treaty of mutual aid with the Emperor and himself took the field at the head of his formidable cavalry. German contingents were sent by Hanover, Saxe, Würtemberg, the Palatinate, Hesse-Cassel, Bavaria and Anhalt. They all joined up with the small Imperial army commanded by Charles of Lorraine. When, on 12th September 1683, they took up their positions on the heights above Vienna, it might have been a scene from the Crusades. The Papal legate—a Capuchin monk Marco d'Avrano—preached to the assembled troops, just as a ser-



mon had been preached by the Carmelite, Dominique de Jesus Maria, before the battle of the White Mountain. King Sobieski, the German princes, Max Emmanuel of Bavaria and Charles of Lorraine all partook of the Holy Sacrament. Morale was high and it was this rather than any military skill that led to victory. The Sultan's troops, who had not expected any engagement before the spring, were taken completely by surprise, abandoned camp and, panic-stricken, fell back towards Hungary.

The numerous discussions, usually biased by the ideological outlook of the individual historians, about the merits of the victory and its military importance, or about the jealousies that promptly grew up between the victors, are largely futile. One fact that remains indisputable is that the victory was of immense profit to the Emperor. Henceforward his ministers made sure of maintaining a strong army under the command of the Duke of Lorraine and the Margraf of Baden, and now planned the reconquest of Hungary. Every year more towns were liberated and in 1686 Buda itself was relieved.

The deliverance of Vienna was celebrated by thanksgiving services in all the churches, fêtes were staged in the city and a spate of prints—they were the equivalent of our magazines today—was widely circulated. The Emperor is shown as a Roman conqueror in triumphal procession. He is seated in a chariot hung with the trophies of war, dragging behind him a train of Mohammedan prisoners, captured Turkish standards decorated with horses' tails, and tall melancholy-looking camels. Above, surrounded by a glory of clouds, the Church might be seen showering its blessing and thanks upon him. Here was a second Constantine!<sup>1</sup> It did not matter much that this Constantine was no soldier and had remained down in Linz while the other princes had undertaken the deliverance of Vienna. Quite a lot of people, both in the Empire and abroad, gave him the credit for this glorious victory.

With Vienna no longer in danger and with Hungary reconquered, a new era began in which the Hapsburg lands and Hapsburg policy counted for something in the pattern of Europe. The Hapsburgs became, what they had never been before, a great power.

From now, right up to the time when the crisis of the Austrian succession shook the State and revealed its inherent weaknesses (and even this crisis was overcome), there were about forty years of uninterrupted success and growing prestige. It seemed possible that the Danubian territories might form a state, or even become a fatherland, for although they were an extension of the German Empire, they maintained a distinct individuality. The social system strengthened the position of the great nobles and prelates; the great estates grew more prosperous, though the lot of the workers, upon whom the whole economic life depended, showed no corresponding amelioration. There was a determination to maintain the status quo and sons were expected to follow strictly in their fathers' footsteps; there was a paternalism that sprang from no profound wisdom but did

provide a sort of family benevolence under the pretext of being just commonsense or the fruit of experience. Habits on the whole became very set, although the taste for ostentation increased.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that all social classes were now enjoying a better standard of living and that some people had done very well for themselves, led to the comfortable illusion that everything was perfectly all right, that the present system was healthy and durable and all that was necessary was to leave well alone—the machine would run by itself. If defects and snags could not be ignored they could be put down to the frailty of human nature or regarded as acts of God.

This background and the outlook on life that it fostered explain the general success and individual characteristics of Austrian civilization and the new pattern developed by Baroque.

As the nobles grew richer their rivalry in out-building each other increased. Prince Eugene decided that his residences must be worthy of his great political and military prestige;<sup>3</sup> the Chancellor of Bohemia, not to disgrace his office, must have one of the finest palaces in Vienna; the great noble families—the Schwarzenberg, the Lobkowitz, the Dietrichstein, the Kinsky, the Clam-Gallas, the Daun, the Schönborn and the Eszterhazy—commissioned building after building, palaces in Prague and Vienna, and country houses on their estates. They provided a magnificent setting for the unending round of receptions, theatrical performances, and concerts, or for house parties during the hunting season.<sup>4</sup>

This boom naturally increased the demand for skilled executants. The fact that technical knowledge had by now become far more widespread and the population had steadily increased enabled this demand to be met in part by indigenous artists, so that we find the percentage of Italians employed, though still high, decreasing. The best of the Danubian artists, however, had been trained in Italy and they no less than the Italians themselves studied the most successful achievements there, and later on also in France, in an endeavour to single out elements that would appeal to the Austrian taste. These they welded together to form a new style, which still remained Baroque in feeling but was quite original in character.

The grace of curved lines and the subtle effects of an oval plan are particularly favoured in the numerous new churches and houses. Some models were furnished by Bernini's work, but it was the achievements of Borromini and Guarini that were more often imitated. Decoration tended to be lavish and flowery; the brilliance of coloured marble capped by gilded capitals was much admired; the cupolas of the churches, and the vaulting of side chapels were covered by dazzling, if facile, frescoes, and the same style was used in painting the ceilings or the state rooms in the palaces. Nor had that extraordinary tour de force which Pozzo had carried out at Sant Ignazio been forgotten, and *trompe l'oeil* was extensively revived to give effects of great spaciousness. Painting and sculpture became even more closely allied and the theme of an altar picture is taken up by the numerous



pieces of statuary on the altar piece or in the surrounds of a reredos. It may be a miracle or an ecstasy, or scenes of battles and victories where everything becomes a frenzy of movement. Another characteristic of Austrian architecture is that the desire to astonish by sheer size is tempered by a wish to charm.

Vienna at this time was being rebuilt and transformed into a beautiful city at an amazing speed but, unlike Rome or Paris, she founded no school. Perhaps that is why there is no central authority here. The artistic movement is far more aristocratic than Imperial. The Emperor himself was but one more customer amongst the noble clientele. If it were not sacrilegious one might say that this was sometimes also true of God, so busy were the artists fulfilling commissions to glorify His saints. Indeed this demand for artists from every side explains why we find a general dispersion rather than a few concentrations of Baroque art throughout the Hapsburg lands and running into south and west Germany. Here it met with other artistic influences flowing in from France (especially the work of the French decorators) but these were easily assimilated, and we get the abbeys of Bavaria, Franconia and Swabia. A little later on and we shall see the graceful and meticulous being favoured at the expense of the monumental—that is, the advent of Rococo. But we must not anticipate. In northern Germany both Protestant severity and the authority of the Prince checked this lyricism. The Baroque of the Electoral Palace in Berlin, designed by Andreas Schlüter, has all the solid and august qualities of a Roman building.

The overriding necessity of producing so much in so short a time, the determined search for surprising and novel effects, the sudden overwhelming fashion for this style and for virtuosity explain why the work of this time is so unequal.

When one realizes how much the characteristics of a society may sway the artist in his choice of forms, and, vice versa, how great an influence a masterpiece may exert on the emotions and outlook of the people who see it every day, one cannot deny that there exists some affinity between Baroque and the Austrian spirit, which often valued sensibility and taste above the rigorous demands of deductive reason or settled purpose. It is easy to understand the conflicts in the national struggles of the nineteenth century and how the middle classes who attached more and more importance to practical affairs rejected all that this pleasing but purely imaginative art could offer. But it had none the less produced masterpieces which display the genius of undeniably great artists. In Vienna the palaces of the end of the century show that the new generation of Italian artists working in the Austrian capital had a surer technique and greater imagination than their predecessors.

In the Dietrichstein-Lobkowitz Palace, Tencala achieved, by means of the simple columns that flank the staircase, a truly Florentine elegance [151]. In the Liechtenstein Palace, which was built by Domenico Martinelli, the façade is wonderfully harmonious and noble, and his treatment

of the interior shows a purely Roman inspiration, the first that seeks no compromise with local tradition. In the provinces, Santini and Aliprandi show an admirable sense of composition in their arrangement of a building around a large oval pavilion; this is seen both at the Kinsky Summer Palace at Chlumec on the Cidlina (in Bohemia) and at the Kounic residence at Slavkov-Austerlitz, in Moravia.<sup>5</sup>

One sign of how high the prestige of the Emperor stood at the time is that, just as once the Pope had been willing to lend Bernini to Louis XIV, the Pope now gave permission for Andrea Pozzo to work in Vienna. So this artist, who was almost as famous for his treatise on perspective as for the magnificent ceiling at Sant Ignazio, spent the last seven years of his life in Austria. Here he wore himself out, but till the very end there was no decline of his powers. He left two masterpieces: the ceiling of the great hall in the summer palace of the Liechtenstein at Rosau, and the interior of the University Church [152]. The latter, as can still be seen from its façade, was an austere building in the early Counter-Reformation style. Pozzo transformed it into a little temple of glory and apotheosis in the Roman manner. Under the arcades of the four bays twin columns support small semicircular tribunes. These columns, except in the two end chapels where they are twisted, are straight, and their red or green marble strike a serious note in the symphony of colour that fills the whole church. Brilliant notes enliven the compositions which fill the divisions of the vault, and then in their midst is a cupola, grey and gold, with its pendentives and drum—the whole a superb example of *trompe l'oeil* painting. The cupola, though it is but an illusion, appears to soar up from the nave and give it a greater width than it really has. It is even a more ingenious piece of painting than that at Sant Ignazio, though its full effect is only apparent when one is walking towards the altar.

Before the high altar are two superb Corinthian pillars with a pediment segmented to allow a large crown to be seen, from which draperies hang. This alternation of the real and the illusory is very strange and the effects of perspective are increased by grooves which surround the central picture of the Assumption. It is an effort to break with the ordinary and the humdrum, and in this it is successful. It shows a desire to enable the spirit to be more easily rapt away and does correspond to some form of religious emotion, which it would be childish to condemn on the grounds that they are nowadays unfashionable. It is indisputably a masterpiece, since it can still delight and charm us, though there is such a plethora of virtuosity and varying effects, that it misses the inherent power which is the hallmark of the greatest works of art.<sup>6</sup>

The feeling of innate strength that Pozzo just missed can be found, however, in other Austrian buildings. There were three great architects amongst the Germans: Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, Hildebrandt, and Prandtauer.<sup>7</sup> The first of these was born in 1656, the son of a sculptor in Graz.





VII The tradition of Borromini continued by the German artists of the eighteenth century is evident in the church of St John Nepomuk in Munich, built by the Asam brothers. The figures in the choir illustrate the dogma of the Trinity





During his youth he spent twenty years in Rome with the family of a Tyrolean artist called Schor, who had collaborated with Bernini. Fischer von Erlach was on friendly terms with Carlo Fontana, who was Bernini's nephew, and he may well have known the great architect himself for ten years. More important than this, however, was the daily opportunity of studying the Roman monuments. When he went to Italy it was with the intention of becoming a sculptor like his father, but during his stay there he decided to become an architect instead. He was recalled to Austria and became drawing-master to the Archduke Joseph. When in due course his pupil became Emperor, he appointed von Erlach to the post of Principal Inspector of the Royal Buildings. Commissions flowed in. In Salzburg he built two fine churches for the Prince Elector: the Trinity in 1694 and the Collegienkirche in 1696. The first of these remind one of the graceful composition of Sant' Agnese; the second, with its large curved portico between two towers with loggias, shows plainly the influence of Borromini. Prince Eugene asked him for a design for his winter palace and von Erlach designed as one of its main features a magnificent ceremonial staircase, which was ornamented with Atlantes, so that every time the prince entered his house he enjoyed a triumphal procession [153 & 154]. The Emperor asked for plans for Schönbrunn, and Count Clam-Gallas commissioned him to build his town palace in Prague. It is interesting to know that while von Erlach was in Bohemia he met Jean-Baptiste Mathey and admired the elegance and strength of his architecture. Later on, when he visited England he got to know both Wren and Vanbrugh.

Lukas von Hildebrandt, the second architect mentioned, was his junior by twelve years. He too had been trained in Italy, but in Turin instead of Rome; there he steeped himself in the works of Guarini, which thus became the predominant influence in the formation of his own style. During the campaign in Piedmont he was an engineer with the Imperial forces and met Prince Eugene, who brought him back with him to Austria. Here the two architects became rivals, but the differences in their early training led them to use a profoundly different architectural idiom. The palaces of Fischer von Erlach have a Roman majesty. His façades are faced with pilasters and crowned by attic storeys and balustrades. The main lines of the buildings are calm and serene: the decoration is supplied by sculpture, a profusion of statues of *Termes* and Atlantes. Hildebrandt's style is more complicated and vigorous. His masterpiece is the famous Belvedere in Vienna, which was Prince Eugene's summer palace [156]. Here the articulation is determined by a series of pavilions—the central one in advance—which open out between two small corner turrets with steep arrises capped by cupolas. The garden front boasts a large loggia of three arches under a big curved pediment. Statues are used as pedestals along the architrave as though they were supporting it, though it is clear that they fulfil no structural need. It is a victory of fantasy over logic, and the effect is enchanting.

Fischer von Erlach and Hildebrandt are complementary, and one is inevitably reminded of Bernini and Borromini, for here again are two artists with incompatible genius both working at the same time to beautify and transform a capital city. Some have hailed Fischer von Erlach as the founder of a new style which combined the two apparently irreconcilable elements of Roman Baroque and French Classicism.<sup>8</sup> One might question whether the two styles are really so antagonistic. It seems much more likely that von Erlach, with so many years experience in so many different countries, became a true European.

He certainly kept in touch with the major works of his contemporaries and had grasped the fact that their art reflected the historical changes of the times. Bernini had interpreted the triumph of the Papacy; the French classical school celebrated the victories of the greatest monarch of his age; Wren expressed the power of a Britain that was strong enough to challenge the hegemony of France and would shortly expand her influence throughout the world. It was these grand conceptions that sustained the great masters and fired their imagination. Without such an ideal they would have remained but copyists of an earlier heroic style; inspired by it they became creative artists. In the service of a glorious and mighty sovereign, or of a noble who led the life of a great prince, or of a soldier whose fame recalled the heroes of antiquity, the artist could feel that he had a mission to fulfil. Whether he were architect or painter it was for him to use all that he had learnt from the traditional sources and adapt those lessons to present circumstances in honour of his august patrons. Monumental size must be combined with elegance. The most imposing and durable piece of architecture should also have the graceful quality of music, the most transient of the arts, and at this time the most favoured.

Schönbrunn as we see it today, a pleasant enough echo of Versailles, does not at all resemble the first plans drawn up by Fischer von Erlach.

If we wish to know what Inigo Jones and Webb would have built at Whitehall, what Bernini would have made of the Louvre, or what Fischer von Erlach planned for Schönbrunn, we must look up the archives for contemporary prints. The palace of Schönbrunn was meant to be on the high ground where the Gloriette now stands, and its great mass outlined against the sky would have been a worthy monument to the grandeur of the Hapsburg Emperors. But here, and also in what would have been his second great secular building, von Erlach was frustrated. His ambition was to have completed the rebuilding of the old Hofburg, but all that he achieved was the noble chancellor wing and the beautiful decorations of the library. In his ecclesiastical architecture he was more fortunate, and has left one church worthy of his ambitions. This is the Karlskirche in Vienna [159]. It was a votive church which the Emperor Charles VI built in honour of his patron saint, Carlo Borromeo, whose intercession had been prayed for during an epidemic of the plague, which ended in 1713. The church was begun in 1716. Fischer von Erlach died before it was



finished but it was completed to his plans by his son Joseph Emmanuel.

The Karlskirche is an imposing building which is well situated in a large space left free after the demolition of the old ramparts, but it is not in any way on the scale of a cathedral. It is often asked whether it is a success. It is difficult to doubt it, even if one's admiration is not whole-hearted. One could say that it is less an organic entity than a juxtaposition of separate elements, but also its great merit lies in bringing these together and uniting them in an indissoluble and daring plan. When one enters the church, the nave, in the form of an ellipse which supports the dome and is surrounded by a small and large side-chapels, has neither the amplitude nor majesty of the superb octagon of the Salute. It is prolonged by the choir and the high altar, though this appears to be a unit distinct from the ellipse [160]. The problems of space are solved, it might be alleged, in a clever but facile manner. But what grandeur and what grace!

The exterior is a most surprising feat of imagination. The entrance is a small peristyle of six columns; on each side the walls curve back to join up with two towers, where two great open arches support second storeys that are crowned by squat onion cupolas. The dominating features are the dome and two high rostral columns that stand in the curve of the walls. The dome has a majesty that makes it not unworthy of comparison with the great masterpieces that crown St Peter's in Rome, St Paul's in London, or the Invalides in Paris. It is in striking contrast to the vertical lines of the two columns. These are imitations of the antique columns of Antonius and Trajan in Rome, but here the reliefs are of scenes that symbolize the Imperial virtues of temperance and constancy [158].

All these elements, chosen from so many different traditions, achieve a most happy balance and it is only later on that one may see how distinctly individual they are—some diluted with the charming but fragile extravagance of Rococo, others hardened by the austere abstractions of the neo-classical.<sup>9</sup>

It is the equilibrium between them that gives such originality to the church; it can be sumptuous without being heavy, and refined without being artificial. It was intended to be a reply to the monuments of other European capitals, and to express the message of the Austrian Empire in a belated but unforgettable addition to the grand and triumphant architecture of the seventeenth century.

Johann Prandtauer, the third great German architect mentioned, is not an architect who caters for the Emperor or the court circles. He is the great exponent of another aspect of Austrian architecture—the monastic. The building or reconstruction of abbeys was not, of course, confined to Central Europe. During the seventeenth century, and more especially as it drew to a close and rents from landed property increased, it was a phenomenon common to all the Catholic countries of Europe.

Lecce, in southern Italy, presents even today one of the richest and most

interesting assembly of Baroque buildings. Its charming churches, in various styles and highly decorated, are practically all connected with religious orders: Santa Chiara with the Franciscans, Sant' Irena with the Theatines, the Carmine with the Carmelites and Santa Croce, with its incomparably rich façade, with the Celestines [162].

France also would probably have had some evidence of her own to show had not the Revolution or, still worse, the black gangs of the Restoration days mutilated or dispersed so much. In Austria and southern Germany, political and social circumstances were more favourable. All through the eighteenth century, monastic churches and buildings were still being rebuilt, or sometimes just repaired and adapted to contemporary taste. Such was the case at Klosterneuburg, when the Emperor Charles VI suddenly took it into his head to make a new Escorial out of the Augustine monastery. He was never able to finish this and what there is is only a small fraction of what had been planned. But Prandtauer had already transformed the old Romanesque church with its nave and two aisles into a sumptuous and gay Baroque church, in which the original lines can still be traced. One cannot talk of vandalism, since one fine work had replaced another and within the walls that he had built there was to grow up one of the noblest examples of Baroque decoration. At the main altar, there is a magnificent curve which brings the columns to surround the central picture of the reredos.

At St Florian it was decided to reconstruct the abbey as a votive offering after the siege of Vienna. The first plans had been drawn up by Carlo Carlone. Later on, in 1708, Prandtauer was called in by the Abbot Födermayer, the son of a peasant of St Florian whose fanatical local patriotism was largely responsible for carrying on the building. Prandtauer worked on here until 1726. In his plan for the marble hall, the straight columns along the walls give an air of solemnity and triumph that is perfectly suited to a memorial of the glorious liberation of Vienna and the victories over the Turks. It is one of the finest works of monastic architecture.

But his most remarkable success is the complex of the monastery buildings at Melk on the Danube, which he planned in 1702 [165].<sup>10</sup> A huge spur of rock over the Danube offered a site of exceptional beauty. Fischer von Erlach had already shown at the château of Frain (Vranov in Moravia) which overlooks the Dye, how such a situation could best be exploited. Prandtauer may have remembered this, but his own interpretation is remarkably original. Take for example the way in which fortified bastions on the land side are balanced by the swelling curves of the magnificent terrace overlooking the river. Seen from the valley, these appear to support the whole building and, in contrast to the fortress-like entrance, seem redolent of peace and serene well-being. The monastic buildings round the Prelate's Court are quite regular, but from there a staircase leads up by easy stages to the terrace and the magnificent church. Rising high above the terrace between the two lively façades of the marble hall (less solemn



here than at St Florian, but of a flawless elegance) and of the library [167 & 168], the church is an admirably harmonious composition with its twin onion towers standing forward from the great drum that carries the cupola. There is a continuous and delicate interplay between the concave and convex volumes, vertical lines, curves, and spherical surfaces. The 'orchestration' of the interior recalls the Gesù in Rome [166 & VI].

The ground-plans of both churches consist of a single nave with side-chapels that link up through the thickness of the buttresses. But in Melk the soaring height of the building and the spaciousness of the bays almost give the impression of a church with nave and aisles. At the transept crossing, the drum supporting the cupola opens up a new vista. Along the walls of the nave, tall grooved pilasters rise to support the cornice of red marble which is recessed above the curved tribunes in the balcony. These contrasting lines call forth such a strong feeling of movement that the very building seems to undulate. The profusion of frescoes and decorative motifs on the ceiling, the generous use of statuary in the main chapels in the transepts and on the high altar, the gilded busts that decorate the nave and the magnificently elaborate organ cases, all combine to give the sanctuary an intensely emotional appeal. One can find an amazing variety of accentuation in the churches in Rome, but though Melk may have Roman derivations we have here another style of Baroque.

As a matter of personal taste one may prefer one to the other, but each has its own character and a different ideal to express. Roman Baroque—even in the most unexpected inventions of Borromini—retains affinities with the majesty of the antique or the subtleties of Renaissance Florence. Austrian Baroque finds some of the elation that marked the Gothic or Flamboyant styles. The Roman is perhaps more self-sufficient; Melk, one might almost say, requires music to complete its full beauty—transient melodies in a building which itself seems evanescent.<sup>11</sup>

Austrian Baroque can also be distinguished by its choice of certain motifs, or by its originality in combining different themes. Even when it uses twin towers joined to a façade, the design is freer and the towers higher than those one would find in Italian Baroque. They have some affinity with the soaring spires of Gothic cathedrals. Whether Fischer von Erlach built the church at Haindorf (Heinice) in Bohemia is still a matter of debate. But it is of interest because here the architect has abandoned liturgical orientation and the church points towards the mountains which he uses, as it were, as an immense backcloth. On either side of the large convex portico the twin finely proportioned towers, placed on the diagonal, support onion-shaped bell turrets. This became a favourite design with that family of Tyrolean architects, the Dientzenhofer (John worked at Fulda in Germany, and Christopher and his son Kilian-Ignatius in Bohemia) and was fashionable throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. It reached its culmination in the moving façade of Balthasar

Neumann's pilgrimage church of *Vierzehnheiligen* in Bavaria [178]. We often find a dome associated with the twin towers; it either rises above the nave to equal their height by being supported on a drum at the transept crossing, or it may on the contrary subordinate them to its own mass to strengthen the effect of its size and power. Such was Hildebrandt's solution in the church of St Laurent at Deutsch-Gabel in Bohemia and in St Peters-kirche in Vienna.<sup>12</sup>

For the interior, the plan usually revives the theme of interlacing ellipses as interpreted by the subtle combinations that had been worked out by Guarini or Borromini. The multiplicity of contrasting effects, and the surprising but harmonious results that were achieved can be seen in the *Piaristine* church, *Maria Treu*, in Vienna, where all is convex or concave and yet has on the whole an atmosphere of fine and delicate beauty that cannot but call forth religious feeling [169].

Equally successful is St Nicholas de *Malá Strana* in Prague, built between 1704 and 1750 to the plans of Kilian-Ignatius Dientzenhofer who had perhaps used those of his father Christopher or of other artists. This church was meant for the Jesuit college and it is curious as we look at it to recall the Italian or French churches built a hundred years earlier for the same purpose, and see how little they have in common.

Some Czech critics here find both the direct influence of Guarini's work mingled with echoes from Mansart.<sup>13</sup> Its sheer size is impressive—its proportions are almost the same as those of Melk.<sup>14</sup> Nor does it show any less originality than Prandtauer's work when it comes to adapting the traditional Baroque themes. Its strongly curved front is both a revival and a transformation of the seventeenth-century Italian façade. The magnificent ribbed dome and adjacent campanile produce an unforgettable impression of strength, but the whiteness of the stone and the green patina which the years have given the copper of the dome and campanile add gay and clear notes of colour to the solemnity of the whole [175].

The interior is sumptuous and graceful: the beautiful side-chapels are of such depth that one might take them for aisles, though the plan is of one central nave, the statues are full of movement and on a gigantic scale, the painted ceiling is a striking work in the Venetian style by Kracker, and the fluid design of the choir is most elegant [176]. It is one of the most beautiful churches in Europe. Though at first glance it may appear surprising, one is soon conscious of its charm—a charm that comes from an inherent unity, perfect proportions, and the profound, unaffected conviction with which the interplay of contrasting lines is handled.<sup>15</sup>

To be able to cite, as we have just done, first an Austrian and then a Bohemian church as examples of one style, shows how regional differences were now becoming obliterated. Though various parts of the Empire might still retain their diverse laws, they shared a common civilization and the same social life.<sup>16</sup> One could cite another example: the cult of St John Nepomuk was primarily a Czech phenomenon and his canonization in



1729 had been the cause of great national rejoicing throughout Bohemia, but now he was a favourite throughout the Austrian provinces and was even welcomed in Hungary. The Czech nobles began to invite artists who had made their mark in Vienna, and we find that Bohemian Baroque is no longer directly inspired by Italy but comes within the orbit of Austrian art.

Prague began to compete with Vienna. There were many more commissions and, since Czech taste at this time was rather eclectic, we find some curious juxtapositions. The great religious paintings of Peter Brandl (1668-1735) are in the Roman tradition but are also contemporary with the brilliant work of Laurent-Wenceslas Reiner (1689-1743) who was inspired by Pozzo and the Venetian school.

The taste, virtuosity and dash of Reiner's work, achieves, by quite different methods, a decorative effect that might be of the seventeenth century. We can see this in his *Battle of the Titans* in the Cernin palace, or *The Last Judgment* for the church of St Francis of Assisi: but when he paints St Wenceslas, a subject that demands a feeling for patriotism and great sincerity, he can only supply brilliant execution.

Finally we must mention the magnificent collection of statuary to be found in Bohemia. The Charles bridge in Prague is, with statues lining both parapets, a royal processional way of the Baroque, and we find Bernini, thirty years after his death, inspiring a new school of sculptors. The earliest of them was Jaeckel. His vigorous inspiration and mastery of composition are shown in two groups he executed in honour of the Blessed Virgin—the Virgin between St Dominic and St Thomas, and the Virgin with St Bernard. Everywhere flowers are scattered and cherubs gambol in the clouds.

A very varied output came from the workshop of the Brokoffs. The father, Jan Brokoff, was a Slovakian by birth and the sculptures which he did by himself, such as the St John Nepomuk of 1623, have a calmness about them; later on when his two sons were associated with him—the more talented of them was Ferdinand-Maximilian (1688-1731)—the work becomes more gesticulatory, as in the groups of St Ignatius or St Francis Xavier, which were carved in 1710 and 1711. These are reminiscent of the decorations by Baciccio and Pozzo in the churches of the Gesù and Sant Ignazio in Rome. Finally there is the very curious and theatrical scene called the *Triunitaires*. It shows prisoners in a tower guarded by a Turk in fancy-dress (1712) and became as celebrated and beloved in Prague as the Zouave on the Alma bridge became in Paris.

The masterpiece of the bridge is undoubtedly the group of St Luitgarde, carved by Mathias Braun in 1710 [177]. The 'most beautiful of the children of man' descends towards the languishing saint and already leans upon her shoulder. We have already seen how many misunderstandings and how much nonsense arose about Bernini's *Ecstasy of St Teresa*, when people accused it of portraying profane rather than sacred love. It was the same story over again with Braun's work. It is most difficult to analyse the

almost uneasy feeling which it inspires, for there is no ambiguity here and Braun has, like his Roman master, banished any trace of carnal sensuality.

There is a soft yieldingness in the attitude of Christ's body as it glides from the cross and in the lines formed by the arms of St Luitgarde as she clasps His legs. But, beneath the crushingly heavy crown of thorns, the Saviour's face, full of wounds and of suffering, is that of a dying man. The regularity of feature, the finely modelled planes of His face still bear the imprint of His beauty, but the eyes are sunken and the cheeks ravaged. The sacrifice of the Redemption masks the human beauty of Our Lord.

The face of St Luitgarde is less beautiful, and seems but a weak imitation of Bernini's St Teresa. Braun obviously had that in mind but lacked the ability to equal it. But the animation of the whole body, the ardent and imploring gesture, the ecstasy and the submission, the general attitude of caution and respect, are particularly admirable, and of an utterly different order from the lusts of the flesh. One detail should be noticed. A kiss may be the first sign of love, the truest expression of fervour and tenderness, yet to see it exchanged between the Saviour and one of His creatures would be almost sacrilegious. '*Noli me tangere.*' Yet still the impalpable idea of the token of love seems to hover over the mystical scene, and, at the extreme end of the group, rather in the background, two cherubs do exchange a kiss, their little bodies only just showing through a cloud, innocent and almost immaterial. Braun thus managed to introduce this symbol of earthly love which the composition needed, and to give it a pure spiritual significance.

It is through works like these that the late-flowering Bohemian Baroque can, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, claim a place beside the Italian. We find Mathias Braun giving the smile of the angel in Bernini's ecstasy to the statue of Religion trampling underfoot the skeleton of Death in the terrace decorations at Kuks. He is haunted by Bernini, and behind Bernini hovers the ghost of Michelangelo. He carved the magnificent Atlantes which support the balconies of the Clam-Gallas palace in Prague. But he became so overwhelmed by orders that a whole atelier was kept busy meeting the demand. The designs of his fertile imagination were carried out indefatigably and brilliantly by his workmen and apprentices.

When can one begin to talk of Rococo as a style in its own right, akin to Baroque, but yet distinct from it? In 1938, for instance, there was an exhibition put on of *Baroque in Prague from 1600 to 1800*, but this great space of time included art that may have inspired but certainly had not become Baroque, and stretched on to include works that had ceased to be so. A contemporary critic, Hans Werner Hegemann, suggests that the transformation of Baroque into Rococo took place between 1710 and 1740, although he does not overlook the fact that the most prolific and beautiful Baroque achievements in Central Europe were as late as 1720 to 1730. He also very justly observes that 'the evolution which led to Rococo was not





- 151** The palaces of the end of the seventeenth century show that the Italians then invited to Vienna brought greater knowledge and imagination than their predecessors. Tencala built the Lobkowitz Palace (ABOVE) aided by Fischer von Erlach

As its façade shows, the University Church was an austere conception in the first style of the Counter-Reformation. Pozzo turned its interior into a little temple of glory and apotheosis in the style of Rome







153 The geniuses of Fischer von Erlach and Hildebrandt complemented each other. In the Winter Palace, built for Prince Eugene from 1695 to 1724, they both worked for the glory of the same epoch





**154** Fischer von Erlach designed a magnificent grand staircase for Prince Eugene's Winter Palace. It is adorned with Atlases and provided a triumphal way for the Prince every time he returned home



155 The private Chancellery of the Kingdom of Bohemia is one of the finest palaces with which Fischer von Erlach embellished the imperial capital of Austria at the beginning of the eighteenth century





- 156** Prince Eugene's Summer Palace, the Belvedere, consists of a series of pavilions, ending in little sharp-ridged corner towers crowned with cupolas. It was built by Hildebrandt in the first half of the eighteenth century
- 157** The beautiful decoration of the Imperial Library in Vienna was commissioned from Fischer von Erlach, who was helped by his son





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The Karlskirche, or church of St Charles Borromeo, was built by Fischer von Erlach. It is imposing and well sited in the open space made by the destruction of the old fortifications, but it lacks cathedral proportions. The view on the LEFT emphasizes the ingenious complexity of the church. The porch on the ground floor corresponds to one of the great side-chapels. On the right is a free-standing tower with an open porch. Beyond is one of the two triumphal columns



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The elliptical nave of the Karlskirche supports the dome, and around it are large and small chapels. The choir and high altar continue the line of the nave in a clearly differentiated structure



This work by Pernoser, with its striking reminders of Bernini, was created in honour of Prince Eugene, a Maecenas of imperial art in early seventeenth-century Vienna. His heroic career bears the stamp of the Baroque world





The façade of the church of Santa Croce, built by Riccardo for the convent of the Celestines in Lecce, was transformed during the Baroque period by Zimbalo and covered with a profusion of ornamentation





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The church of San Matteo, one of the most picturesque Baroque buildings in Lecce, was rebuilt at the beginning of the eighteenth century by Carducci. The lower part is convex, in comparison with the concave upper part of the façade (ABOVE). Confined in the narrow streets of the city, the structure is too crowded to be seen properly

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RIGHT. On a great spur of rock overhanging the Danube and providing a setting of exceptional beauty stands the Abbey Church of Melk, built by Prandtauer









**166** The profusion of frescoes and designs by Rottmayer in the vault of Melk Abbey contributes to an impression of decorative richness

RIGHT. The Library at Melk stands beside the beautiful façade of the abbey church on the great terrace above the river (ABOVE). The subject of Paul Troger's fresco on the library ceiling (BELOW) is 'Knowledge and virtue bring man close to God'









Built by Hildebrandt and Dientzenhofer on a centred plan with protuberances and corridors, the Church of Maria Treu nevertheless retains a certain unity and religious feeling 169

The painter Maulpertsch, in the Venetian tradition of Tiepolo, decorated a great number of churches and châteaux in Austria, Bohemia and Hungary, in the second half of the eighteenth century, among them the church of Heiligenkreuz



The Abbey of Durnstein, attributed to the architect Joseph Munggenast, is admirably situated on the banks of the Danube in the picturesque Wachau district, where the Abbey's Baroque tower adds to the beauty of the landscape



The four Fathers of the Latin Church are sculpted on the gateway of Durnstein Abbey. This subject, the most widespread in Counter-Reformation art, is frequently found in the convent churches of Austria







Herzogenburg Abbey is the only **173**  
Augustine abbey in Austria to have  
continued in use from its founda-  
tion in AD 1112 to the present day.  
Rebuilding was begun in 1714 to  
Prandtauer's plans

**174**

The organ at Herzogenburg, built  
between 1749 and 1752 by the  
Viennese organ-maker, Josef Henk,  
was given a lovely rococo decora-  
tion about 1780, in green, gold and  
pastel tints



St Nicolas of Malá Strana in Prague is monumentally impressive. The splendid ribbed dome and adjacent storeyed bell-tower of Dientzenhofer's design create a memorable effect of strength. The huge, life-like statuary, dazzling fresco of the vault and elegant rhythmic design of the interior (BELOW), all create a decor of graceful magnificence

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Works like this statue of St Luit- 177  
garde, sculpted by Braun in 1710,  
show how belatedly, compared  
with Italian achievements, the Bar-  
oque came to Bohemia





One of the best illustrations of the transition from Baroque to rococo is the church of *Vierzehnheiligen* by Balthazar Neumann. It retains the appearance of a basilica, with straight walls and a narrow façade between two towers

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- 179 BELOW. The interior plan of *Vierzehnheiligen* is a succession of ellipses, and the central altar (LEFT) adds a touch of pure decoration, increasing the rococo effect. The figures on the altar (RIGHT), deliberately elongated and attenuated, are full of movement to the point of gesticulation
- 180







**181** Using the delicate forms of rococo art to illustrate the themes of penitence and mercy, the charming pilgrimage church at Wies, Bavaria, remains imbued with spirituality just as much as the great Baroque works



a fundamental change of style, like the change from Gothic to Renaissance: it is not something entirely new, but only a phase within the great epoch that embraces it'.<sup>17</sup>

It would have been surprising had it been otherwise, since general social conditions had not changed. There had been no new spiritual movement, nor had the profound economic revolution yet impinged on these countries. The artists still served the same patrons—the great aristocrats, the Church, and the country nobility. They had scarcely any contact with the middle classes, and indeed the bourgeois had yet to form a distinct class and still fitted in with the manorial system. The original impetus that had been generated by the Counter-Reformation and the wars against the Infidel now had lost some of its urgent appeal, but the new social groups that were beginning to form showed little cohesion and were too unclear themselves to formulate any new ideals that might call for new forms of art.

Rococo seems essentially but a refinement of Baroque: the pursuit of the graceful and decorative at the expense of the architectural or monumental quality of the work as a whole. The artists had recourse to such novelties as ribbons, arabesques or shells for the details, and everywhere there were curved lines. In many cases, it might be called a conservative art which aimed at carrying on the work of Baroque, refurbishing a little here and there, but not deviating from inherited principles. The artists could choose freely from the material collected by preceding generations—and what a storehouse that was, with designs of the French decorators or the treatises on perspective by Pozzo, where a model could be found for every fantasy!

One of the most striking examples of this sliding, as it were, of the Baroque into Rococo is furnished by the famous pilgrimage church of *Vierzehnheiligen* [178]. Balthasar Neumann was a mature artist at the height of his powers when he began it. For the shell of the building he has maintained the basilical plan with straight lines, and the two twin towers are linked by a slender façade. The plan for the interior is in striking contrast, with a succession of ellipses which one recognizes again in the pillars of the nave and the chapels in the choir [179 & 180]. The prevailing impression is one of an extraordinary animation in the handling of space caused by this intricate play and counter-play of curves, and the church with its deep nave seems to be built on a central plan. Already this excessively Baroque work is ready for a piece of decoration that, by exaggerating the contrasting lines and volumes, seems to give it a finishing touch, though at the same time it makes the whole ensemble more Rococo. Thus the 'Gnadenaltar', which stands free in the centre of the church, fits in perfectly with the architectural background. It was added by Johann Jakob Küchel (1703-69) after Neumann's death. It is an essentially ornamental and almost affected composition that was substituted for earlier designs which were more monumental and more in keeping with the spirit of Baroque.

The trends in statuary show something analogous. The sculptors in Prague received orders from many monasteries and parish churches in the provinces, and in a study of these Luz Blazicek has shown that there were two simultaneous movements.<sup>18</sup> One prefers calm and static attitudes, while in the other the statues gesticulate in a manner so exaggerated that often any pretence of following the laws of physics or balance is openly scouted. But both movements are at one in their decision to break with the pattern set by the preceding generation.

One had either to become a 'pre-Braunite', seeking earlier and simpler modes of expression, or choose the exact opposite, using emphatic gesticulation with the effects heightened by distortion of the figure, which determinedly became thinner and more and more elongated.

The images of the saints in the niches of the walls or on the reredos seem inspired by some sort of passionate frenzy, or on the contrary they congeal into brightly painted gigantic statues which, strangely enough, make one think of the figures of the Flemish Renaissance.

However, while the style itself was changing, a blow was going to be dealt to the social conditions which had sustained the Baroque. The Emperor Joseph II, who had been co-regent with his mother since 1764, was in no way impious and was not against the social hierarchy. But his general philosophy, his love of freedom, his interest in the more advanced economic development of the Western countries, and his admiration for Frederick II as an enlightened despot convinced him, and many others as well, of the injurious effects of the manorial system, with the great estates belonging to the nobles and to the Church.

His aim was to destroy feudal bonds, put religious worship on a new footing, and by freeing the peasant from personal servitude and unjust forced labour to create a body of workmen who could be employed in producing manufactured goods or fill the bureaucratic posts in the civil service of a modernized and centralized state. While his mother still lived he could do nothing, for Maria Teresa was indeed a Baroque monarch—if by this we mean one who clung to tradition and was fearful of any reorganization of the Church, lest it impaired faith. But once he became sole sovereign he undertook his reforms boldly. The Edict of Tolerance that he issued in October 1781, gave new life to the Protestants, and within the next year their adherents numbered fifty thousand people.

On top of this came a series of ordinances that were designed to re-allot the dioceses of the bishops and the parish lands more judiciously, together with others that severely attacked the monasteries. Measures that had been already taken against the Jesuits in 1773 were now enforced against the contemplative orders and the religious fraternities.

Much greater sums of money would now be in free circulation, and a large number of buildings would now be ready to turn into factories. Now that at last the peasant was freed by the new regulations from his traditional superstitions, there were to be no processions, except that of the



Holy Eucharist, no more pilgrimages to Maria Zell, nor to Bilá Hora, nor to Prague in honour of St John Nepomuk; the side altars and the reredos must go, though the high altar of course remained. The pictures were to be sold. There should be no more bell-ringing during a storm, no more dressed-up statues like the Holy Child of Prague in the Carmelite church, and no more ex-voto offerings of gold or silver. It was a wholesale condemnation of Baroque forms of devotion, with all its graceful and childish excesses. In future a more highly educated clergy, a good servant to the State, should spread an enlightened faith amongst the faithful, encouraging them to be reasonable and industrious.

Similar measures were aimed at corporations which had fallen into a rut, and an impetus given to the manufactory of cotton, textiles, linen and metals. Commerce was encouraged. Everywhere labourers on the land, freed from their hereditary yoke, could choose their employment and wax rich. The order of the day was for a liberal capitalism to replace feudal capitalism, and it should allow (at least in principle) every individual to develop his capabilities to the utmost, according to his lights and leanings. The towns too should henceforward develop their own life and no longer have to depend for their wealth on orders given to builders or carpenters by nobles erecting palaces, or priests churches.

It does not concern us here that Joseph II was unable finally to impose his ideals (forced labour, for instance, was reintroduced after his death and lasted until the Revolution of 1848) nor that the Danubian countries continued to show many feudal traits for a long time afterwards. What from our point of view is important, is the shattering of a whole social system that had endured for more than two hundred years. The choice had been taken of another world—one in which abstract reasoning, the calculation of profits to be gained from manufactories, and the interest in winning a large market all played their part. Machines were called in to assist or replace human labour and the ground prepared for the triumph of an industrial, middle-class civilization which would condemn 'the anachronistic landed civilization' (*la civilisation anachronique foncière*) and all its sentimental and imaginative qualities that had given such a welcome to Baroque.<sup>19</sup>

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## CHAPTER XI

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# *Baroque in Poland and Russia*

THERE can have scarcely been a more striking contrast than that between the plains of western Europe where in the seventeenth century the national boundaries had already been firmly drawn, and the wide open spaces to the north and east. There one might find a few market towns along the banks of the rivers or where roads—or more probably primitive tracks—intersected. These sparsely populated regions were, by western standards, an unfinished and half-baked Europe, yet even there there were nations that had achieved cohesion and were self-conscious enough to impose authority and their pattern of civilization. This explains the role that was played by Poland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ever since the early Middle Ages she has shared the influences that had shaped Europe, and now that the wave of economic progress reached her, the new conditions gave her an opportunity to display her vitality and power. She bore the title of Republic, and liberty was a word to conjure with; but in reality power resided with a military aristocracy which could put a formidable force of cavalry into the field. They were, however, first and foremost interested in preserving local privileges against the demands of the nation as a whole. The elected king was in fact the Minister of War, though his policy, formulated in consultation with his generals, was sure to draw the whole nation in his wake. In the sixteenth century the population may well have been four million—but of these how many were in a position to have any influence or take decisions? It was a formidable state, but since every election of the king was an occasion of a fierce clan struggle, it was also a fragile one.

It is worth noticing that one of the most passionate patriots of this period, the Jesuit Peter Skarga, denounced the shortcomings of the political system, on the grounds that some interests were opposed to, or at least dissociated from, the State. They took advantage of internal dissension in Russia, which they had done everything toacerbate, to launch aggressive attacks that brought the Polish armies to Smolensk and to Moscow itself.



They even planned to set the Polish king or his son on the throne of the Czars.<sup>1</sup>

Not only were there rifts in the political sphere, but also in the intellectual and religious ones. The cultured found support in the University of Cracow (which was already distinguished for its mathematical learning) and also in the towns, such as Torun, Lublin or Cracow, where the merchant and artisan classes were strong and were in touch with foreign countries—especially with Germany, Hungary and Bohemia.

In these centres the philosophy of Erasmus, the doctrines of Luther and later on of Calvin, or the evangelism of the Bohemian Brethren found groups predisposed to welcome them and ensure their success. Even the anti-Trinitarians, who were equally execrated by Protestant and Catholic, found some favour here. It was, altogether, a multiplicity of sects and a confusion of belief. The growth of Protestantism outside the towns points to a division of the aristocracy, for it is scarcely credible that it could flourish in the countryside without the sanction or encouragement of the local nobility. Such had been the pattern throughout Europe, and more especially in Bohemia and in Hungary. The aristocracy as a whole, however, helped to maintain the Catholic faith, because it had been influenced by Italy, and it was usual for a young nobleman after finishing his studies at Cracow to go on to the University of Padua.

King Sigismund Augustus, whose mother was an Italian princess, accepted the decrees of the Council of Trent in which the great Polish humanist, Cardinal Hosius, had played an important part. Thenceforward a tolerant administration attempted to master a situation full of contradictions, and it may well have been due to this tolerance that the Counter-Reformation was able to develop in Poland. The Jesuits, called in by Cardinal Hosius, were successful in their mission. They recruited Polish members, kept up close ties with the College in Rome and made provision in their own colleges for the education of the sons of the nobility.<sup>2</sup>

Soon Poland was called the Spain of the North. It is a misleading, or at least an exaggerated description, since it draws a veil over the unending religious conflicts and the number of dissenting sects; but it is a true enough description of the outlook of the majority of the people and of its most influential leaders.

There was another strong reason why Poland should be looked on as a bastion of the Catholic faith. Since its union of the Republic and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, many subjects belonged to the Orthodox faith. They were centred in the provinces chiefly populated by the Ruthenians, who because of their numbers rather than for any racial difference wished to remain apart from the Muscovite Russians, and in the region of Kiev, which was a city of ancient Russian and Ukrainian civilization. We will return later to the profound character of this Orthodox faith, for even if a church should pass through a decadent phase, it need in no way impinge upon the purity of its principles nor the soundness of its teaching. This

Orthodox faith still submitted to the Patriarch of Constantinople henceforward '*in partibus infidelium*'. On the one hand there were the diminishing authority of the Patriarchal seat, the general loosening of morals which allowed bishops of scandalous reputation to be appointed, and, probably of greater importance than either, the Protestant menace to be considered. On the other hand there was the increasing activity of the Jesuits, as well as a genuine revival of Catholicism in Poland. All this favoured the union of the two churches. It had been prepared in Rome and was finally proclaimed at Brest-Litovsk in 1596. It did not mean that the whole of Poland had become Catholic again, but it was a great victory for the Catholic Reformation, using persuasion only, and but twenty-five years after Lepanto. It was indisputably a victory, but not so far-reaching a one as it then appeared. Though the Uniat Church was permitted to keep its Greek liturgy, this failed to arouse much enthusiasm amongst the Orthodox or rally public opinion to them. The Orthodox Church soon pulled itself together again and in 1632 King Ladislav had to permit it to be reconstituted. In Kiev too, a new Metropolitan of great energy and steadfast faith—Peter Mohila, who had been Archimandrite of the Monastery of Caves—was successful in launching a spiritual revival amongst the Orthodox.

The economic changes at the beginning of the sixteenth century were also of the utmost importance for Poland. They remind one of what was happening at that date in Bohemia and Hungary. The traditional agrarian pattern of the Middle Ages, when the land was divided up into small estates belonging to the knights and in tenures cultivated by the peasants, was slowly changing. The big landowners became keener than ever to enlarge their property and the disputes with the village communities over the use of waste land grew more bitter, when they wished to plough up grazing or fallow land to grow corn.

As the value of the quit-rent and the ancient tenures had depreciated, the seigneurs demanded instead forced labour on their land. Added to forced villein labour, the work of the paid labourers was necessary when there was an exceptional harvest. Many markets were open to the products of these great domains. By using the Vistula for transport as far as Danzig, Polish grain could be loaded at that port into boats for Italy, to make up for the occasional failure of the Mediterranean harvests. Moreover this need for grain was partly the cause of a trek to virgin lands in the East. These were Lithuania and Ukraine where the more enterprising landowners established large new estates, away from the traditional restrictions of the provinces.<sup>3</sup>

But if one asks if this prosperity was widespread, we find that, on the contrary, it was confined to a privileged and exclusive class. In the country the old class of landowners became embarrassed financially. In Little Poland any attempt at expropriation was doggedly and courageously opposed by the country nobility, but though they might save their patrimony they became steadily more impoverished. Amongst the peasantry there



was also an even greater want and distress. At the same time the towns, especially the most ancient ones, either stagnated or declined: even Cracow with its considerable foreign colonies showed no progress in its civil architecture during the seventeenth century.

The fundamental characteristic of the times was the profit which was only reaped by those big estates that were commercially exploited in the interest of the great aristocratic families who owned them. Such were the Radziwills, the Sapiehas, the Lubomirskis or the Leszcynski—names renowned throughout Polish history.

So in Poland we find that three conditions which had always been favourable to Baroque were once more in powerful conjunction: Catholicism, participation in the Counter-Reformation, and the increasing wealth of the great landed aristocracy.

It need hardly be said that the first artists, architects, sculptors and painters were Italian, and as in Bohemia, the Baroque introduced into Poland was for a long time Italian Baroque. But Poland too had her own traditions, great religious memories of the past. There were the patron saints such as St Edwige. There were sanctuaries that had been venerated for centuries, for instance Czestochowa in the Palatinate of Kielce, which was renowned throughout Poland for its cult of the Blessed Virgin. So Baroque, when it arrived in Poland, found that it must be able to express traditional beliefs as well as the religious doctrines of Trent.

Polish historians divide Baroque there into three chronological stages, and these, curiously enough, coincide with a steady progression northwards, from Cracow to Warsaw, and finally on to Wilno.

The first stage, in the ancient capital of Cracow, is a purely religious Baroque which we can study in the city churches. When Baroque reaches Warsaw, which the king and government made their seat in the seventeenth century, we find it serving both the monarch and the Church. It flourished under the warrior-king, John III Sobieski and his Saxon successors, who naturally enough brought with them the artistic fashions of Dresden, which had much in common with the Imperial Austrian style. When Baroque eventually reaches Wilno it becomes an aristocratic and religious style, showing a refinement that anticipates Rococo.<sup>4</sup> Logically this view is quite correct. Yet by concentrating on the well-known masterpieces—such as the Wilanow Palace built by Guiseppi Bellotti, which brought a touch of the Roman Renaissance into the Warsaw region [184]—the very close connexion, indeed the fusion, of the native Polish genius with the imported Baroque style is apt to be overlooked, since it is most noticeable in the smaller out-of-the-way churches. Baroque, which should be studied as an expression of the needs and aspirations of a whole society, is by this system reduced to a catalogue of fashions.

In Cracow, where decline set in at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the churches after the manner of Vignola or della Porta show such a hankering after Rome, and so faithful a mimicry of her churches that one

feels there that the people must have wished that they were worshipping in the Eternal City. If the plans for the superb church of SS. Peter and Paul were shown to a connoisseur of Baroque style he might well guess that it was somewhere near the Corso in Rome, where it would fit in perfectly between the Gesù and Sant Ignazio [182]. Yet it is in Cracow—built by the royal architect Jan Trevano between 1597 and 1619 after designs by Bernardoni. At this time, too, we find the façade of the Ursuline Convent whose twin towers remind us of the University Church in Vienna, or the Ursuline Convent there, which were of practically the same date. The magnificent reredos in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, with its mighty columns and slightly heavy monumental air, shows how Baroque in Europe lagged behind the new and freer style which Rome had been given by Maderna and Pietro da Cortona in the middle of the century.

But the Polish nobility, like the Bohemian, were not behindhand in acquiring the taste for building spacious country houses which became the centres of social life. The aristocracy were aware of their new power and Baroque could celebrate their triumphant mood. Even if we do know what disastrous political follies they were to indulge in, this should not blind us to the contemporary outlook—after Sobieski's victories and after winning the wars against Russia and Turkey, there was every reason to believe that supremacy was permanently assured and every reason to be proud that they had won it.

One might almost say that the city of Wilno reflected their self-assurance, when it began to evolve a style based on the works of Borromini and Guarini or their pupils. Wilno, too, was to have a chequered and strange history, but in the seventeenth century it was a residential town where the nobles built their palaces and were very generous in their gifts to the local churches. The religious orders had gained a strong foothold: the Dominicans, the Carmelite friars and nuns, the Benedictines, Augustines, Jesuits, and also those Trinitarians who sought to keep the Uniat Church allied to Rome by granting the use of Greek ritual. It was also from Wilno that civilization spread eastwards and exerted an influence on people like Ordine-Nascokine, who was in the Czar's entourage. This set was imbued with the ideals of Latin and Western culture, and wished to bring about a reconciliation between the two Slav nations which had for so long been bitterly hostile.<sup>5</sup>

The Gothic church of St John in Wilno had been restored in a completely Baroque manner and the high façade with its curves, so light and so majestic, undoubtedly shows the influence of Borromini or Guarini [183]. But because a detail of a Polish church may now and then recall some Italian model, it does not explain the underlying reason why such and such a decoration or plan should have been adopted. It is the result of the Latin and Orthodox traditions coming up against each other, and the uneasiness of this clash can be felt. If there is a successful outcome it is not





VIII The façade of the church at Tepotzotlan, its walls covered with a confusion of tangled tropical climbing plants, is one of the most exaggerated examples of Spanish Colonial Baroque





because Italian art has conquered in the East but because it has found some way to express local feeling.

M. Weidhaas, in a scholarly and perceptive treatise, has shown how designs for an oval church—one which is closely related to those of twin towers and a cupola—spread eastwards. The prototype may be taken as the Peterskirche in Vienna, but in the west it was scarcely developed at all. It was during the eighteenth century that this plan swept through Poland and even reached as far as Lithuania and the Ukraine.

As M. Weidhaas justly remarks it was chiefly adopted by the wealthy nobles wanting to found a church: the Konarzcowskis used it when they built a church in 1697 for the Philipppines at Gostyn, and so did the Sanguszcys in 1733 when they erected a church at Lubartow near Lublin. He surmises that it was because of its inherent feeling of power that it became the favourite choice of the great Catholic magnates. Yet it was popular in Poland where it was a concept in strange contrast with a society rent by religious and social factions that were constrained by no central authority.<sup>6</sup> This is only a theory, but an attractive one.

It is in any case difficult not to see in the Baroque exuberance adopted here in the eighteenth century in the churches and palaces of the Ukraine during its brief period of power, some relation between the decorative architecture and the social mood. Some have even detected a particular Mazeppa style of Baroque. But the study of these problems must still remain superficial, because there is still so much spade-work to be done. Yet, turning further towards the East, one may well believe that in Russia circumstances were now favourable, after many years of evolution, to welcome Baroque.

In the preface to his remarkable work on *Avvakum et les débuts du Raskol*—the religious crisis of the seventeenth century in Russia—Pierre Pascal (who, if anyone, can fathom the Russian soul) wrote 'Christianity is one. In the East and the West, in spite of the absence of contacts, and distance, ignorance and negation, the ills to be healed are the same, as are the aspirations and the means employed. The closeness between these Catholics and Orthodox of the seventeenth century is moving. It exists in details, in their character, in their expressions, in their customs, in a thousand traits that I cannot enumerate.'<sup>7</sup>

This little known work opens up new vistas of thought and every word is weighted with experience, so would it seem impertinent if I asked to be allowed to recall a small personal experience of my own that seems to endorse his opinions? It is rather a trivial incident, but one of those which can sometimes give one a lead in an enquiry. It was in 1955. With some foreign colleagues who had come as I had for the celebration of the Second Centenary of the Lomonosov University, I went to see the monastery of the Troïtsa (the Trinity-St Sergius) at Zagorsk, near Moscow. We had been taken there for a religious service in what was called the 'church on

the door'. It turned out to be a chapel built in the fortified wall of the convent, above the door.<sup>8</sup> I was suddenly struck by the look of the porch leading to the sanctuary. It was not very high and was formed by two twisted columns; garlands of vine were entwined around their whorls, and it had a very ornate pediment. It was covered by brightly coloured painting, which was rather clumsily done, but for that very reason it brought back extremely vividly the reredoses of the seventeenth century which one can see in western France in Brittany or Anjou. There were the same decorative elements, the same spirit. This 'church on the door', I was told later, had been built between 1692 and 1693.

Shortly afterwards I was told by a Russian archaeologist: 'There is much Baroque in Russia, because it fulfilled the emotional needs of our people.' Yet how could Baroque, whose ties were with Roman Catholic doctrine and social conditions that were peculiar to Central Europe, penetrate into Orthodox Russia, where hostility to Rome was an established principle? And what form did it take? It is a vast problem whose importance cannot be overlooked. It calls for a long and careful study, and here one can only mention a few facts which may possibly help as guidance.

The first factor of importance is that for a long time Russia had looked to the West for her artists.<sup>9</sup> However, since Central Russia had no quarries the buildings had to be carried out in wood. This applied equally to the *izba* built by a peasant, to churches and even to the summer palace of the Emperor at Kolomenskoïe, which was still being restored and replanned in 1667. Naturally the tendency when working in wood was towards elaborate fantasy and complex patterns rather than symmetrical order. Bricks, however, were also used to replace stone and as early as the fifteenth century the Czars had summoned artists from northern Italy to build chapels in the Kremlin. They were past masters in brickwork and, though their work was inspired by Russian models which were greatly influenced by Byzantium, some touches of Italian architecture are added.

In one way it is like the transitional period in France, when outwardly the feudal castles remained unchanged, but foreign workmen were welcomed and decorations of arabesques, medallions, elaborate candelabras, or pilasters and loggias in the Italian manner became popular. So in the Kremlin the chapels still retained the Souzdal type of architecture which had become traditional since the twelfth century—but though the square ground-plan and innumerable cupolas remain unaltered, the façade or details of decoration may be Italianate. One example is the vigorous entablature and the shell motif in the Cathedral of the Archangel. If one also realizes that the rustic decoration of the Granovitāia palace can also be found in Bologna—in the Palazzo Bevilacqua—it is obvious that there was no barrier of taste between the Latin and the Orthodox worlds. By the seventeenth century, Russian artists had for some time been quite familiar with the Renaissance use of free or engaged columns, or the entablatures and friezes which held such an appeal for Baroque architects.



A second factor is bound up with Russian history. A terrible crisis, political, economic, social and religious at one and the same time, gripped Russia from 1605 (or 1601) until 1613: it was 'The Time of the Troubles' ('*Smutnoe vremia*').

Russia, with its only sea-board in the north, was largely cut off from the main commercial currents of the time and they had little effect on her. When society was reorganized it was still on an agrarian pattern with the cultivation of the land as the basis of its economy. Here, as elsewhere, the powers of the great landowners were strengthened and some of the aristocrats acquired vast estates and seignorial rights over the peasants. These serfs were not, as is so often believed in the West, slaves, but the *krepostnoi* were liable to the *corvée* and, though in principle they might claim all the rights of a Russian citizen, their lot actually depended upon the whim of the local magnate. They were on the whole an ignorant and superstitious people, ready to obey, then to rebel, and then to submit again. Then in the seventeenth century there was a revival of religion in Russia, but this again brought trouble in its wake; the strife between the priesthood and the Empire broke out afresh and there was schism in the Rascol.

During this period many new influences penetrated into Russia from Russian Ukraine, even though these provinces were still under Polish domination and Poland itself was looked upon as the arch enemy and the representative of the Latin heresy. Nevertheless, when Kiev was restored to Russia in 1667, the Orthodox clergy there, who had always remained faithful to the Greek Church, had been considerably influenced by the Roman Catholics, and though this had only a slight effect on matters of doctrine they had absorbed much of the religious feeling of the West.

When we try to settle the limits of Russian Baroque in the seventeenth century there are two pitfalls to be avoided. The first is the 'Orsian' temptation: a temptation to describe this older form of art (which was still vigorous in the seventeenth century) as Baroque because of its dynamic force, its intense decoration and wonderful fantasy. It was an art that produced the pyramidal churches with their corbelling (*kokochniki*), or a church such as the one dedicated to Basil the Blessed in the Red Square in Moscow, with its sumptuous cluster of cupolas encircling the central pyramid. The second temptation is to describe as Baroque only the art which was introduced by Peter the Great, which I can only mention here but should be borne in mind.<sup>10</sup> At this time we find traces of French Classicism cheek by jowl with works that derived from the Roman tradition of Bernini, Borromini or Rainaldi.

The leading spirit of this movement was Rastrelli: but it is Baroque in Russia, not Russian Baroque. No heed is taken of native traditional art. The palaces are built in an entirely Western manner. Even when the Russian architect Prince Ouchtomsky designed the tower (or belfry) for the monastery of the Troïtsa, it was, with its succession of loggias, undoubtedly Baroque, but it would have been equally at home in either Vienna or

Prague at any time between 1741 and 1767. It is a beautiful building, but there is no mistaking the preference shown for a purely Western style.

Statues now sometimes appear in the balustrades of palaces and, though their use was strictly confined to civil architecture, it is a surprising innovation and a measure of how things had changed. The Orthodox Church had forbidden the use even of bas-reliefs lest they might encourage idolatry, and so long as the Church was predominant in Russia there was no question of statues being allowed, whether they were of God, of the saints, or to commemorate famous men. Opposition to them was so strong that only the revolutionary fervour of Peter the Great could overcome it.

On the other hand during the seventeenth century there was a reaction against the Protestantism which had been introduced into the towns by German or Swedish merchants and the Russian priests realized the necessity of a cult of images to counteract it. But this must be understood in the broadest sense of the term. It included not only the paintings of the icons, but also the decorations that surrounded them, the general style of worship, in which the emotional appeal of bells, candles, fine vestments, obeisances, incense and vivid colours—all played their part. There was no place, then, for an austere plain style: homage was rendered to God with great ritual that demanded a splendid background. In a peasant society where life is precarious, where help and even miracles are perpetually looked for, there is naturally a general love of the wonderful. It is not surprising that a cult of perpetual intercession in which the Virgin or the saints may be expected to give protection in everyday affairs, where holy water has efficacy to bless the land and the streams, should satisfy the profound instincts of the people.

Finally, it was a period of change—not of change violent enough to disrupt society or to formulate any new ideal—but one that was receptive to new ideas, so it is understandable that new and hitherto quite unknown art forms should become popular. The lower classes were pleased to copy patterns that they thought pretty, little knowing that they came from the heretical Latins.

The wealthy who could experiment on a large scale felt it daring to follow a new fashion. At least, these seem to be the reasons why Baroque managed to establish itself in Russia before the great changes introduced by Peter the Great.

Twice, when discussing French reredoses M. Hauteœur compares them with the iconostasis of the East<sup>11</sup> and there is undoubtedly an artistic (and perhaps a liturgical relationship) between them, the reredos and the rood-screen. In the ancient and traditional Russian form the pictures of saints were surrounded only by simple gilt mouldings, and it was not until the seventeenth century that columns of various orders and entablatures are used to emphasize the iconostasis. Sometimes the columns are grooved and a decoration of vines fills the spiral. Examples of this can be seen in the church of the Dormition and round the altar of the Trapeznaia at the



Trinity-St Sergius, and this time it is iconostasis which resembles the Baroque reredos. We find them again in the Kroututski monastery in Moscow (1694) where, standing on pedestals and crowned with Corinthian capitals, they flank two great arches [189]. In contrast the windows on the first storey are framed by deeply sculpted columns with foliage and flowers for their decoration.

It is true that these are only ornamental details in an architecture which as a whole is faithful to the Muscovite tradition, yet they bear the stamp of another style. At Zagorsk we find a completely Baroque monument. This is the little octagonal chapel which is built over a miraculous spring [185]. Here two orders are used—twisted columns support the entablature, and little columns, carved and painted, decorate the windows of the first storey. It is roofed by a flattened cupola, a drum that supports a second cupola and a lantern. This little oratory at the foot of the Dormition church was built at the command of Ivan the Terrible in the imperial and hieratic style of the Kremlin churches. Yet it was designed to be a sanctuary for the poor, who came here to pray, to drink or anoint themselves with the holy water of the spring, or to implore some personal favour, and surely it is striking that for this purpose Baroque forms and ornamentation were chosen, which had so popular an appeal in the West.

Equally striking is the similarity in some church towers or churches to Latin Baroque, where the façade is built up from two or perhaps three storeys of windows, and might well have been designed by Soria or Vincenzo della Greca. Decoration is restricted to the use of engaged columns, twisted or straight, and pediments with cusps and volutes; and it is only the cupolas that disarrange a purely Italian impression (for instance at Moscow, St Nicholas the Thaumaturge, the Preobrazenskaia 'church on the door' at the Monastery of the Virgins (1688), the Dormition Cathedral at Riazan (1693-99) the Trapeznaia *tserkov*, i.e. the refectory church, at the Troïtsa [186]).

The Patriarch Nikon, the great reformer of the Church at the time of Alexis Mikhailovitch (1645-76) wished to return to the tradition of churches with cupolas and abolish the more recent pyramidal style. However, when he rebuilt the church of the New Jerusalem at the Monastery of the Resurrection at Istra (near Moscow) in 1656, he accepted a plan which included a large rotunda. On the outside it was decorated by Corinthian pilasters, which separate the tall pedimented windows. It has a monumentality worthy of Bernini, and yet also finds its place in Russian architecture.

At the end of the century, then, we see a new style taking shape, and it had already enjoyed such success that it seemed that it must have a great future. It became known as Moscow or 'Narychkiné' Baroque. Lev Kyrillovitch Narychkiné was the brother of the Czarina Nathalie, the second wife of Alexis Mikhailovitch and the mother of Peter the Great. He belonged to one of the aristocratic (but not very old) families which

had been enriched by the Romanov Czars, who gave them estates with many serfs and even factories. Whereas an aristocrat of ancient lineage was usually incapable of changing anything inherited from his fathers, these 'semi-new' men were more enterprising. They liked to make a show of their wealth, and it is not surprising if Lev Kyrillovitch erected at his own expense the prodigious church of Fili in 1693 [187]. The plan is very simple—a quadrilobe placed round a square church. The eastern lobe houses the altar, and the other three each open on to a vast terrace that surrounds the church and leads to a two-winged staircase descending to the ground. Above the church is an octagonal pavilion, above that yet another, and finally an onion-shaped cupola.

This succession of storeys, with one prism rising above another, is striking enough, but the effect is still more heightened by the contrast between the colour of the bricks and that of the white stones, by carved columns and pediments, and by the balustrades which look like lace garlands. The building as a whole is an example of traditional Russian architecture, yet it bears the marks of Italian fashion and one can feel a new, even a Baroque spirit about it.

The church of Dubrovitsy, with its large tower with loggias and oculi soaring above a quadrilobe, is more closely connected with Polish Baroque [188]. Its decoration is overloaded and even dares go so far as to have statues and niches. On another estate belonging to Narychkine is the church of Troïsky-Lykov, which was built between 1698 and 1703 [190]. The fine spring of its tower, the wide and graceful sweep of its rotunda, its plain columns and the curve of its volutes, make it one of the most outstanding examples of Russian Baroque. Its air of elegance and refinement is achieved without any artificiality or affected decorations. It is inherent in the general structure of the building, where the handling of space and volume show a mastery and a subtlety that recall the spirit of Borromini.

This Baroque style, so full of fantasy and colour, so remote from any morbid anxiety, appears to be a diversion or perhaps a song of hope, when it is set against the misery and sharp contrasts of Russian society of the time. It certainly bears the mark of foreign influences, but up to the present we do not know enough to identify all the foreign architects who were then active. They gave a new vitality to the traditional Russian style, and managed to link their artistic ideals to the native feeling. The 'simple people', as they were called in Russia, came in their crowds to the oratory of the Troïtsa; the churches of Nikon and of the Boyar Barychkin were so full that no one could imagine that they had originally been built to satisfy the lust for ostentation and power of a privileged group.

Of course one might point out that later on the people flocked in just as great numbers to the churches which were built in St Petersburg, yet one cannot overlook the fact that with Peter the Great there began a new era in Russian art. His decree that stone should be entirely reserved for buildings in his new capital certainly checked the growth of Baroque in Mos-



cow. But in St Petersburg the Western style was imposed solely by the force of his personality and there was no time for historical feeling to catch up with it. First the French style of Leblond was adopted, and then it was succeeded by the half-Italian, half-French style of Rastrelli.

Peter the Great, however, had ultimately condemned Baroque, for the old social conditions that had fostered it were swept away. The feudal system was doomed and in its stead there was imposed (not with complete success) an entirely different régime. It was Western in outlook and run by an alien bureaucracy whose first aim was to industrialize the country and build up its arsenals and factories.<sup>12</sup>

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## CHAPTER XII

9

# *Colonial Baroque*

UNDOUBTEDLY the most beautiful works of the Baroque are to be found in Europe, even if the Europeans themselves do not always show much pride in or appreciation of them. But the oddest, most tortured Baroque creations, which reach the farthest limits of ingenuity and fantasy, have been tucked away in Spanish America; and there they are neglected as though they were the dullest things ever to have come from the Old World.

The colonists themselves must have played a considerable part in these buildings, of course, but in the present state of our knowledge, it is very difficult to define it. The ecclesiastical architecture is much more interesting and worthy of consideration than the civic buildings, but it is also, as a field of study, so full of subtleties and obscurities which defy analysis, that it is better to begin by considering the general trends which influenced Latin America.

In the beginning armed conquest was almost simultaneously matched by missionary effort. The cruel disparity between the ideal of the universal Christian Church and the means taken to impose it could never have been greater. Las Casas, the great apostle to the Indians, personally pleaded with Charles V on behalf of the native population, which was being subjected summarily to the harshest extremities of the law. The conquistadores who had engaged in this expedition were undoubtedly some of the most audacious men of their age, but also, it seems, they were amongst the most lacking in traditional values of behaviour. Many of them may have well been good Catholics, but it was Europe, reaping all the benefits of the conquest, who paid the piper, and she was steadily becoming more than ever obsessed with religion. She insisted that this must be a conquest in the name of Christendom. It is not merely by chance that the era of the great discoveries should be also that of religious reform—both Catholic and Protestant. It would have been unthinkable that Europeans could discover a whole new continent without it causing some disquiet in their religious beliefs. It was disturbing in many ways: people wondered whether the really primitive societies which were sometimes found in the New World could possibly be admitted to the Faith on the same footing as the communities of white men; they also wondered if, in the highly civilized



societies with their rich technical lore and powerful religious cult, the whole inspiration were not to be regarded as something demoniac.

But, whichever the problem, the salvation of the natives was not an indifferent matter either to the invaders themselves or to the European governments in whose names the conquests had been carried out. It was inevitable that a missionary effort should be inaugurated at once, and the endeavours to convert the heathen (which had already a long history in Africa and Asia) now also spread to America, where its success was much more easily achieved.

The richest territories of the New World fell into the hands of European societies who already had some experience of winning back their Mohammedan neighbours to the faith and who still lived as though they were Crusaders. It was also true that every European nation looked upon it as her duty to implant Christianity in new territories wherever they might be discovered. Even now a European visitor to New York—whatever his politics, nationality or religious outlook—cannot but be moved when he reads the inscription (at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 29th West Street) that marks the site of the first church erected by the Dutch.

European civilization, homogeneous in spite of all its diversities, is inseparable from religious feeling. The Protestant Reformation, it is true, did not lend itself to any sumptuous religious art, while the Catholic Counter-Reformation with its ritualism followed in the steps of the Spaniards and encouraged display both in the construction and decoration of its churches. The result was that in the provinces of the Spanish Empire and along the coast of Brazil there was an expansion of an art, tumultuously overcharged with decoration, which is nevertheless one of the most virile expressions of the Baroque.

Art historians have an immense task in front of them even to catalogue the works. It is even more difficult to relate them to the general history of civilization, to enquire in what measure various trends were transposed from the Old to the New World, and how or if they were grafted on to indigenous traditions. Yet even that is a seductively easy way of tackling the problem, because it links Spanish-American Baroque too closely with two influences, though both these were undeniably very powerful. The first of these was the existence of an extremely ostentatious and highly developed native art that flourished—at least in Mexico and Peru—before the Spanish conquest. The cathedral in Mexico—one of the most remarkable monuments to European civilization in the whole of the New World—rises in all its magnificence on the site where, when the city was the Atzec Tenochtitlan, there stood the great Temple of the Sun shining with gold. The intricate craftsmanship of the Incas or Aztecs and their love of show may lead one to speculate on how sympathetic they may have found the Baroque religious art of the conquerors.

The second influence was the discovery of great treasure and precious metals—for it would surely be the obvious thing to do to divert this

wealth of gold, silver and precious stones, hitherto used to decorate idols, to the greater glory of the true God and His Church. Indeed was it not gold leaf from Spanish America that had added such splendour to the ceiling of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome?

But the facts are that the ancient temples had been destroyed by the conquerors, and any attempt to draw an analogy with European history is quite misleading. If so many antique works had survived in Europe it is because Christianity, even while the Roman Empire was still at the height of its strength, managed to convert Roman society to its Oriental beliefs, though in the process it became itself to some degree Romanized. The Empires the Spanish had subdued in America inspired feelings of nothing but contempt and mistrust. The Spanish destroyed everything, or nearly everything, and scarcely ever was any native building adapted for the new religion. Christian art was something imposed from without upon a country where all manifestations of indigenous genius had been ruthlessly uprooted. Doubtless in the early days some converts amongst the labouring classes may have been employed in the actual execution of one or two buildings, but only under Spanish supervision.

In all the territories conquered by Spain—whether in Central America or in Brazil, whether the conquered people were highly civilized or still living in prehistoric conditions—the first buildings erected were purely utilitarian. They were simple oratories or chapels put up by monks of the various orders (Franciscans, Augustines, Dominicans, Carmelites or Jesuits) who wished to build something as quickly as possible. They were far too preoccupied trying to get their first catechumens even to think of introducing any artistic splendours from Europe: and instead of adapting and rededicating native art, they began by breaking with it absolutely.

Again, although the close connexion of great stores of gold and the richness of colonial Baroque is evident and undeniable, it should not be forgotten that, at a certain epoch, even colonial provinces which were absolutely barren of precious metals used the most elaborate and heavily gilt ornamentation such as we see in the golden chapels at Bahia, Recife or Rio de Janeiro, which were built towards the end of the seventeenth century. Or we can see the exact opposite happening if we look at the eighteenth-century churches at, for instance, Minas Geraes in Brazil. Here, in the very centre of a rich mining district, there is no ostentatious richness and the churches have the quality of work by Borromini.

In short, the luxury and the lavish use of silver or gold in colonial decoration is bound up with the development and exploitation of El Dorado, but they are connected in a very roundabout way. In every case the principles laid down came from the mother country. If the gold-producing colonies used gold to enhance the glamour of their churches it was only because in the first place such a practice had been adopted in the metropolis and that later on the pattern was imposed from there on to the colonies. 'If Your Majesty would be graciously pleased,' Bishop Montufar wrote to Philip II,



'to send us a plan and some competent master, for we have none here.'<sup>1</sup> Such was the rule which dominated the growth of colonial architecture up to the nineteenth century: plans were sent out from Europe.<sup>2</sup> It was a rule that could only be broken when a very simple building was in question or, at a later date, when a mature colonial society might produce some vigorous artistic personality.

It was the metropolis that recommended to the New World what had already been tested at home, and even the apparent eclecticism of many colonial achievements are but an echo of the diversity of taste and tradition to be found in Europe. In the sixteenth century classical inspiration, Gothic survivals and traces of Moorish influence may be found contemporaneously in the colonies, because they could all be found juxtaposed in Spain itself.

There is nothing more striking than the splendid arches of the great doorway of San Cristobal at Merida or of San Juan de Dios at Mexico City, which recall Alberti's great façade of Sant' Andrea in Mantua. The first of these works may well be described as rational and classical; the power and restraint of the second could also claim these qualities were it not that, in the vast shell-shaped porch, the pilasters which frame the statues had not been given the form of flames—a feature which adds a most fantastic and unorthodox note.

In Brazil the earliest buildings carried out by the Jesuit missionaries for the small Christian communities were simple to the point of bareness, yet the purity of their lines has great charm.<sup>3</sup> The Benedictine monasteries, such as the one at Rio de Janeiro, adopt the severe style of Classicism and the cloisters are encircled by heavy pillars of the Tuscan order. The churches, between square towers crowned by squat pyramids, have no other decoration than the lines of the stone coursing which frames the porch and the rectangular windows of the *coro*.<sup>4</sup> The Spanish conquest was still not quite so self-assured that it could ignore the problem of defence. Colonial churches were still fortified and this particular monastery of São Bento, on the side overlooking the bay, has a rampart as strong and thick as any castle wall.

In proportion as the colonies grew richer, and in the Spanish ones the exploitation of the mines even more intense, parish and monastic churches and those for the mendicant orders multiplied at such a rate that it became almost an hysteria. Everywhere Baroque, the predominant style at that time in Europe, was adopted; one must make a reservation here, for that did not necessarily mean that the Roman school of Baroque with its Renaissance and Palladian elements was always the model chosen. Undoubtedly some churches such as that of the Jesuits at Quito derive their ground-plans, façades and cupolas from the Roman tradition. Here twisted columns reminiscent of Bernini's baldacchino support a vigorous entablature on each side of the main porch, and Corinthian pilasters give rhythm to the whole, which is austere bare round the side entrances but heavily

decorated by medallions and floral motifs above. Yet most of the façades with their swarming mass of decoration show plainly enough (as Louis Gillet so justly points out<sup>5</sup>) that a reredos had been taken as their model.

It was at this stage that a major factor in the future of colonial Baroque came into play: the use of the native population not merely as subordinates but as artists with liberty to give free reign to their ideas. In the Spanish colonies we find something similar to what had happened in Europe, when for many years on end a great army of anonymous craftsmen embellished the Romanesque and Gothic churches with an extraordinary imaginative facility. The clergy were content to control them just enough to see that, in the spirit of the Catholic Reformation, nothing should creep in that might be opposed to orthodox doctrine, but if there was no violation in this respect they did not interfere. Local genius was fully avenged, and as Juan Contreras de Loyoza has pointed out, the liberation of native art was accomplished fully a century before the first claims to political independence were heard of.<sup>6</sup>

In the extravagant achievements of pre-Columbian art one can see how the exuberant natural background, the intricate patterns of lush vegetation with its infinite variation of interweaving lines and arabesques, influenced the decoration of pottery and the vivid colours of their woven materials. These influences no doubt still persisted, and religious art henceforth could provide a new outlet for them. One can agree with M. Pál Kelemen when he says that colonial art falls into two periods: the first when it followed models imported from Europe, the second when decoration ran riot. In this second phase the work of Indian or half-caste Christians became increasingly important.<sup>7</sup>

Even if the Spanish had from the beginning appreciated the manual dexterity of the native labourers in carrying out the simple tasks they were given, it must have been surprising to discover all the resources of their Asiatic taste and exquisite craftsmanship.<sup>8</sup> Decorative detail in fact became the most original characteristic of colonial Baroque, whether in the Spanish possessions or in Brazil. The first work where the newly revived, native tradition impinges on the Spanish is without question at Arequipa, in 1698. In the lovely portal of the Jesuit building, against walls completely covered with sculptured decoration in relief, the round columns stand out, rising from striated pedestals and crowned with very curious round capitals. One has the feeling that one is looking at some strange, highly stylized idols.<sup>9</sup>

But this passion for ornamentation was not confined to architecture. The sub-tropical or tropical climate is very like that of the Mediterranean, though in a heightened manner. We have already pointed out how great a part this played in some European aspects of Baroque and it is still more striking when we turn to colonial Baroque. The new communities in Latin America adopted a religion which could often be celebrated in the



open air, with splendid processions, pilgrimages, and homage paid to the saintly images that were carried ceremoniously through the streets of the city, or indeed paid visits to each other in their famous sanctuaries. As in Europe, Easter was a time for truly popular spectacles. On Ash Wednesday effigies of the saints were paraded through the towns to mark the beginning of fast. On Palm Sunday, processions celebrated the entry into Jerusalem, Christ meeting the Blessed Virgin at Calvary, and the carrying of Christ's body to the tomb. It led, as it had done in Spain, to the development of polychrome statuary, and scarcely a town in Latin America is without its own collection. Some are horribly realistic. Perhaps the famous example in the cathedral in Mexico City, where a saint screams in the agony of martyrdom and ecstasy<sup>10</sup> as his head falls, is not so horrid as the head of St John the Baptist on a platter full of coagulated blood, the work of a Peruvian sculptor. One wonders if the tragic religious genius of the Spanish has not crossed with another even more cruel and whether the tradition of human holocausts offered up to the pitiless gods has not again come to life. But there are other examples that appear reassuring and also efficacious in healing; such is the astonishing St Rita of Mexico whose robe is starred with *milagros* (ex-voto offerings), no less than 1,640 silver and 70 golden ones.<sup>11</sup>

In regions of Mexico (Puebla) and Peru (Arequipa) where the population embraced an ever increasing number of half-castes as the Spanish mixed with the native Indian women, the influence of the half-caste on art is shown by the preponderance of decorative themes which are quite alien to the European.

One must also take into account the effects of distance and isolation. In Europe, Baroque, even when it was welcomed in all its power and glory and exuberant richness, found itself side by side with other forms and ideals of beauty. It was contained by its neighbours, and confronted with what we have described as 'centres of resistance' and patterns of society that were more eclectic and conformed to other traditions. In the New World there were none of these checks. Decoration became increasingly inflated and in the end almost orgiastic. Not everything, however, should be attributed to native influence. The façade of the church at Tepotzotlan, in Mexico [VIII], and the reredos that cover the walls of the *capela-mayor* with a tangle of lines like lianas in a tropical forest [192], is one of the most extreme examples of colonial Baroque. It was finished round about 1750. Placed where it is, one's natural inclination is to think the local landscape or native artists have exercised a strong influence. But if one puts this first impression aside, one recognizes here an accomplished but by no means isolated example of churrigueresque decoration. One has only to compare the choir at Tepotzotlan with the reredos at Salamanca or Umbrete for similarities to leap to the eye: the abundance of motifs and the architectural rhythm of the columns, which retain their feeling of solid verticality and soaring quality in spite of all the detailed ornamentation. Also the

244 churrigueresque reredoses of Spain are evoked by the use of tall polychrome statues—St John the Baptist, St Francis Xavier and St Louis Gonzaga—to give the main accents, while a profusion of angels and animated putti, or the heavier mass of the baldacchinos fill the necessary but subordinate roles.

Compared with this intense Baroque in Spanish America, Brazil seems often to be following almost a classical simplicity, though it had just as good reasons for welcoming the more elaborate style. The Portuguese and Spanish shared the same religion and both celebrated it in the same way. One would have said that the evolution in their colonies would have run parallel.

There was one fundamental difference. The Spanish conquistadores drove on into the interior and established their authority over so great an area that a Spanish Empire was founded. The Portuguese were quite satisfied to control the coastline by possession of a series of ports which could keep in touch with each other by sea. The immense hinterland remained unexplored. The Portuguese were also little given to racial prejudice, and when the expanding sugar-cane industry demanded more and more negro workers, a new element was added to the population. The slaves had already a sensuous quality about their devotions, a taste for images and amulets, and this could easily find satisfaction in the rites and ceremonies of the new religion they were now taught, and they in turn exercised some influence on it.

Yet it would be truer to say that when we consider the differences in their artistic development the colonies only reflected the tastes of their motherlands, which were sometimes quite at variance. Portugal, after the exuberance of its *Manueline* period, often showed a predilection for restraint and sobriety which Spain never entertained. Most of the Brazilian churches have façades which, with their rather severe lines, have obviously been inspired by those Portuguese churches that followed the Italian taste of the Catholic Reformation.

São Salvador at Bahia, which used to be the Jesuit college and is now the cathedral, was brought stone by stone from Europe and is strongly reminiscent of the Roman style though, in the traditional Portuguese manner, two little turrets flank the fine voluted pediment. Only one Brazilian church is an exception—that of the Franciscans in Bahia, which was built by the Portuguese architect Ribeiro in the years 1703 to 1710. It is as finely chased as a coffer, overrun by decorative garlands and curling tendrils that cover the whole walls; while acanthus leaves form consoles or capitals above the four allegorical statues of the rivers of Paradise, which are surrounded and almost swamped by the delirium of motifs. The pediment with hollow volutes and counter-volutes brings to mind the beautiful shell motif of the seminary at Santerem, which has been attributed to Tinoco the Younger.<sup>12</sup> But on the whole the Brazilian façades are severe—or per-



haps sober is a better word to use since nothing can really appear severe in the miraculous luminosity of that country.

The effect of contrast is even more striking when one leaves the simplicity of the porches and façades at Recife, Bahia, or at Rio de Janeiro (São Bento, São Antonio) and enters the churches where the naves open out before one like dazzling golden grottoes. During the seventeenth century Portugal, like Spain, delighted in furnishing their churches with carved and gilded woodwork (*tahla*), using it for the arch before the *capela-mor*, in the choirs (which were usually narrower than the nave since room had to be made for sacristies and corridors at the side) and for the decoration of pillars. One important thing to remember is that *tahla* had first been used and achieved its supremacy in the northern regions of Portugal, where previously Roman art had flourished most vigorously. There the Baroque artists, finding this easily worked material to their hands, had carved out their own adaptations of the pillars, the mouldings and the vaulting typical of a Roman porch, and had achieved some new and beautiful designs for their reredos.

The fashion spread from the north to the south of the kingdom, and, as the Portuguese historian Reynaldo dos Santos justly remarks, it is rare indeed to find any church without one such altar. From the metropolis the style spread to the colonies, and it constitutes the real glories of the Capela Dourada at Recife, São Francisco and the cathedral at Bahia, as well of the convents of São Bento and São Antonio at Rio de Janeiro.

In the church of São Bento the central nave and the choir are covered with a *tahla* carried out in a bold acanthus motif which spills over the pillars, spans the arches, and even embraces the pulpit. The golden balustrade of the galleries above the aisles adds a solemn note amongst all the whorls and curves of the acanthus. The pillars are panelled and decorated with statues of saintly kings and also those Popes who had become beatified and whose history was linked with the Benedictine order. The whole effect is one of magnificence and solid richness which in no way at all evokes the frenzy of the churrigueresque.<sup>13</sup> The statues seem so formal in their hieratic gestures that one would guess the whole design to be much earlier than it actually is. It was, in fact, only in the last third of the seventeenth century that anyone had thought of decorating the rather austere Benedictine church, which had been built forty years previously, with a *tahla*. The carving had been entrusted to a Portuguese *entalhador* who had been employed in the monastery before he took orders, Frei Dominigos da Conceição Silva.

It is possible that he was carrying out plans given to him by the late master of works, Frei Bernardo, who died in 1693. In any case the design that had been adopted was carried out patiently year after year with no concessions to any new tastes that had by then become fashionable. The work was ready for gilding in 1734. Frei Domingos himself did not live to see the completion of his work, but after his death it was carried on by

246 another sculptor called Alexandro Machado Pereira. The whole effect is strong and virile.

At this time, another monastery, that of St Anthony, had had reredoses built in the choir and for the two secondary altars on each side. Here, however, the curves of the Roman arches are less robust and the green and gold paint—not very happily restored about thirty years ago—exhale an atmosphere of rather wan sweetness. Just nearby a third monastic church, that of the Penitents, has an entirely different character, and derives from another style. The interior has been entirely covered by gilded *talha*, the work of two Portuguese artists, Manuel and Xavier de Brito. The whole of this luxuriousness seems striving rather to please the congregation than to praise the Lord. It is not that there is too much decoration, but what there is of it is just elegant frippery. Everything is there: twisted pillars with a wealth of flowers up the spirals, rocaïlles in the style of João V, churrigueresque garlands, a multitude of cherubim heads, grouped in threes, above the baldacchinos, while angels, sculpted in the round, kneel on the capitals of the pillars. The strong curves that hold together the reredos at São Bento are here completely dissolved in a plethora of motifs. The polychrome statues, crowned with haloes that look like silver mantilla combs, are posed in affected attitudes. The High Altar is dominated by a statue of the Blessed Virgin, and the angelic vision of St Francis is most theatrically presented in a niche which allows some very clever lighting effects.

Thus, while at São Bento the monks still went on carving designs of the last century, the Penitents were making their church look like something out of light opera. The *al fresco* vaulted ceiling was painted by José de Oliveira, who had been born in Rio in 1690, and now proved himself to be the first Brazilian artist capable of composition on a grand scale. It showed the Glory of St Francis.

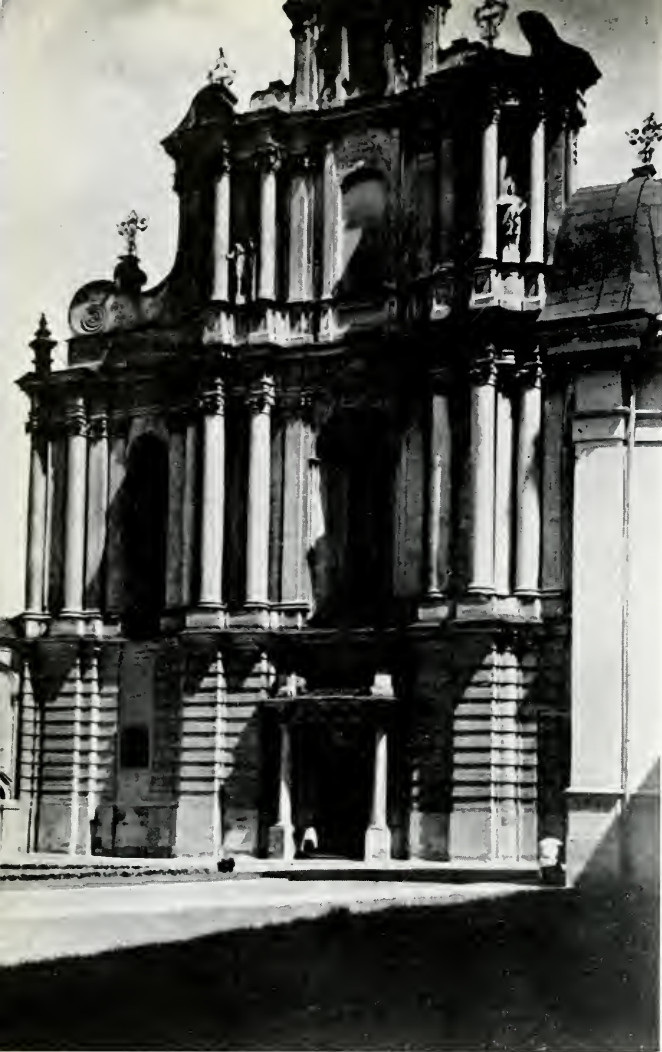
At São Bento the iconography was Benedictine. As you enter the church there are statues of St Gertrude and St Mechtilde, who had been granted visions of the Infant Christ. Then at the altar are St Benedict and St Scholasticus. In the chapels of St Anthony and of the Penitents the iconography is, of course, Franciscan. There is St Anthony himself (his statue has been promoted to be a colonel and draws an honorary pension), St Yves, and St Louis of France. In both cases we can see how great a role the cult of saints played in the spread of Baroque in the colonies, just as it had done in Europe. Whether in town or village, there was a close bond between the inhabitants and the patron saint they had adopted.

The heavenly host was more or less granted naturalization papers for the colonies. The natives chose St Iphigenia as their especial protectress and raised funds themselves to build churches that should be under her invocation. On the whole the saints most popular in the colonies were those which had been brought in by the missionaries of the Counter-Reformation when they first introduced Christian services. There were, however,





182 One would be tempted to place this Church of St Peter and St Paul in Italy, but it was in fact built in Cracow, by Bernadoni, and carried to completion by the royal architect, Jan Trevano



There seem to be signs of the influence of Guarini and Borromini in the Baroque transformation of St John's Church in Vilnius which gave it that lofty, undulating façade, light and yet majestic

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The Wilanov Palace, near Warsaw, built by Bellotti, is a revival of the Roman Renaissance in Poland

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The little Chapel on the Fountain in the Monastery of Trinity St Sergius is erected over a miraculous well; like a great bouquet of wild flowers it expresses the simple faith of the countryside

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The Refectory of the Monastery of Trinity St Sergius is a noble seveneenth century building with a square tower continued in a great hall and gallery. The composite decoration combines Renaissance embossments and Baroque pilasters

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LEFT. The plan of the church at Fili, near Moscow, is quadrilobite. Above the sanctuary is one octagonal pavilion, then another and an onion dome

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RIGHT. The so-called Kroutitski Gateway in Moscow was built in 1694 by Osipa Startsev



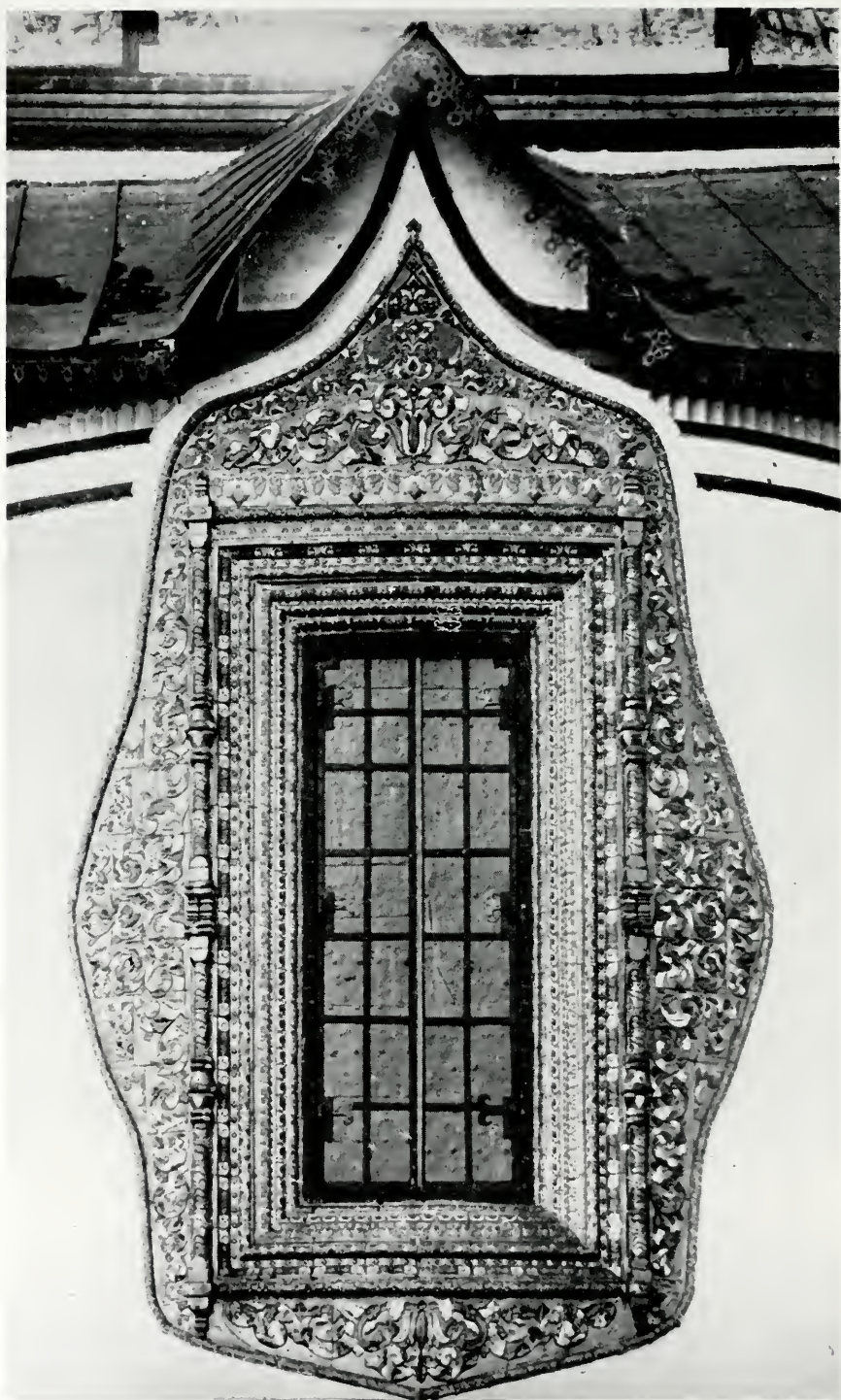
With its soaring tower, varied and garlanded columns and elegant volutes, the church of Troitski-Lykov, near Moscow, is a curious example of Russian Baroque

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LEFT. The great tower of the church of Dubrovitsi, near Moscow, with its loggia and round openings and springing from a quadrilobite plan, is close to the Polish Baroque. Over-elaborate decoration frames the niches and statues







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The window of the Church of St John Chrysostom, Jaroslav, 'with its frame of coloured faience squares . . . is like a rich tapestry hung on the wall. It is a remarkable example of Russian decorative art'. (Alpatov, *History of Russian Art*, p. 329)



An example of churrigueresque architecture, with its excess of decoration: the Chapel of the Church of St Jose, Tepotzotlan, in Mexico

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A superb frame of *pedra-sabao* covers the space between the windows of the façade of the Church of St Francis of Assissi, Ouro Preto, Brazil. Above it, is another sculptured motif in a large-eye-opening

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The little church of Nossa Senhora de Gloria de Outeiro, with its felicitous combination of white parqueting and red stone bands and pilasters, rises from a hill above the bay of Guanabara, Rio de Janeiro

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A surprising series of statues of prophets, by Aleijadinho, decorates the staircase and terrace leading to the Church of the Bom Jesus de Matosinhos, Brazil. Here are the prophets Hosea and Ezekiel



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a few who have their origin in an earlier age, and who had been imposed by the mother country. There were St James and St Sebastian, the patron saint of Rio de Janeiro, who, due to the works of medieval artists, had achieved enduring fame. But much the greater number were saints of modern origin, the Jesuit saints: whether it were those such as Alexander,<sup>14</sup> whom the Society looked upon as their patrons, or recent creations, such as St Peter of Alcantara. The cult of the Infant Jesus had a great following in both the Spanish and Portuguese territories. One famous picture, in the Abbey of Grace at Bahia shows this. It is charming in its simplicity and gaucherie: the Infant Jesus is anxiously pressing his finger which He has just pricked on the Crown of Thorns.<sup>15</sup>

Iconography did just as much, or no doubt a great deal more than sermons or theology to establish Catholicism in the colonies; religious life owed its local characteristics to it in a land where visual and tangible things carried much more conviction than any intellectual system.

Thus Latin America, whether in the Spanish settlements or in the coastal fringe controlled by the Portuguese, first linked up with the European civilization by way of the emotional and spiritual outlook of Baroque, which could adapt itself to suit the local conditions and way of life in each colony.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the discovery of gold mines and diamond fields completely transformed the whole pattern of Brazilian life. Until then the people living in such a heavenly climate were easy going and content to take things as they came.

But now there was a gold rush of adventurers and slaves to the interior, where they hoped to make their fortune overnight. If, indeed, a few large fortunes were quickly made, the miners who had to puddle, wash, and sift the precious earth, working like galley-slaves, soon knew what it was like to endure a misery more terrible and cruel than any a slave suffered in a *fazenda*.

The mining camps became straggling villages, and soon grew into towns. Royal charters granted the status of city to Ribeirão do Carmo, which became Mariana, to Vila Rica, that is Ouro Preto, to Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Sabará, which got shortened to its last name, and to São João del Rei. And in 1709 a new captaincy was instituted—that of São Paulo and Minas.

This was the birth of a society quite different from anything that Brazil had so far seen, though it took over and still carried on old class distinctions. Amongst the prospectors a great many monks were to be seen, or at least men who were dressed up as monks, whose behaviour aroused great suspicion. The authorities did not find it an easy task to decide whether it was the lure of saving souls—and never perhaps had so many miserable souls been in need of spiritual comfort—or the gold that attracted them. In any case royal commands were issued forbidding the religious orders to

go into the mining districts. They were issued again and again, probably because at first no one took any notice of them. It might be suspected that these decrees owed something to the bishops and the secular clergy, who were always eager to do down their monastic rivals. So the new cities were allowed only parish churches. Otherwise religious associations were not banned, and it was not long before they became very flourishing. Some catered for the local aristocracy who had benefited from the new order; others appealed to the black or mulatto population that was increasing very rapidly and in the end was to become a power in the land. The place of the religious orders, who would normally have undertaken the building of churches, was taken over by the lay confraternities of the Franciscans and Carmelites, that of The Rosary, and of São José, which was the only one to welcome both blacks and whites. The towns, with open spaces all round, could expand without hindrance and in due course the miserable mud huts of the first settlers were replaced by comfortable houses and proper roads. These can be seen even today at Ouro Preto or at São João del Rei, though now they are enveloped in an uncanny silence. Yet it was here that those brilliant festivals once took place. One, in particular, became almost legendary. It was in 1733 at Ouro Preto, when there were celebrations in honour of the Triumph of the Eucharist. The Holy Sacrament was escorted by an apparently endless and certainly frenzied procession from the chapel of the Rosary to the parish church 'do Pilar', which had afterwards to suspend Divine Service for the next two years while repairs were carried out. In the mining cities no less than in the coastal towns the most beautiful architecture was religious, though in this case the buildings were not monastic. One fact which has struck historians is that this newly opened up country welcomed, in the second half of the eighteenth century, an architectural style that was completely different from any that had previously been known in Brazil.

The parish churches were conservative in conception. The ground-plan was rectangular, and the tradition of corridors and sacristies surrounding the nave and the *capela-mor* persisted. The Fraternities adopted another style. Elliptical or polygonal plans with curved façades and towers placed diagonally were favoured; and ingenious, sophisticated designs came to the fore. This new movement raises one question which is difficult to answer. The archives, perhaps because some are missing or perhaps because no one bothered to record dates, leave us—at least in the present stage of research—ignorant of which churches were the first to be built. But there is no doubt that the most remarkable one was St Francis of Assisi in Ouro Preto [193].<sup>16</sup> The plan in itself is quite simple—a single nave, rather narrower than one would expect from outside since the *capela-mor* is surrounded by two corridors, leads to a rectangular sacristy. But in front of the *capela-mor* there is a most remarkable rood-screen in stone; the pillars, set at an angle, are so massive that they contain the stairways to the ambos. The façade is grandly and richly decorative considered either from a purely



architectural point of view or on account of the remarkable wealth of its sculpture. The central part is framed, as though it were a porch, by two high Ionic columns which, above their entablature, display the two S-shaped halves of a broken pediment, which respond to each other. This bow-shaped façade is crowned with volutes and a little console that forms a base for the cross. At each side of the columns the walls slant back to two round towers which stand recessed and whose cupolas are surmounted by small pyramids. Against the white background of the walls, the columns, pilasters, and string coursing that is used to round the doors and surrounds of the windows, are picked out by the use of a warmer-coloured stone.

The main decoration of the façade is a superb piece of stone carving (the *pedra-sabão*) that frames the porch and extends up to the windows of the first storey. Above, there is another piece of sculpture in a large oculus.

Opinions have been divided about this beautiful work for the last twenty years. The traditional attribution to Antonio Francisco Lisboa, the sculptor-architect who died in 1814, was almost established when objections were raised and probably the most persuasive arguments were those brought forward by José Mariano Junior. They have not found universal recognition, and Germain Bazin, in a detailed study of the church, has no hesitation in attributing the architecture and the decoration to the same artist.

The actual painting of the ceiling over the nave was undoubtedly carried out by Manoel da Costa Ataide in the early nineteenth century, but at that time Antonio Francisco was still living. The work was carried out in his style, and perhaps the sketches for it may have been submitted to him for approval. The altars in the nave were erected even later, but obviously followed the designs made by the original architect. 'Even in Italy, where so many artists were simultaneously architects, painters and sculptors, there is not one monument like this, which expresses every aspect of a man of genius.'<sup>17</sup>

However great one's respect is for those who attribute the building definitely to Antonio Francisco, one has also to face the fact that all the relevant documents which they relied upon disappeared about 1914 and that no original plans of the church still exist. But a clear enough portrait of Francisco Lisboa emerges from the anecdotes which were collected by his first biographer, Rodrigo Bretas, a century ago. We see an ailing little boy (Aleijadinho), son of a Portuguese father and a native mother, who throughout his life had to bear the double disgrace of being a mulatto and an illegitimate child. His status was so humble that he could never receive a direct commission nor give his opinion on any project as important as the building of a church. He always remained a subordinate, paid by piece-work, even though he might well have designed the work he was to carry out. He was a talented sculptor. When he was getting on for forty, in 1777, he fell ill of that terrible disease, leprosy, which began to rot away his hands. From year to year it increased its hold until only the stumps were

left. But he bound his chisel on to these and still went on working. Suffering seemed only to intensify his energy and his inspiration, for it was in this crippled state that he carried out those surprising statues of the prophets we see on the terrace of the miners' church in Congonhas do Campo. He died in poverty at the age of eighty-four, stricken by blindness. But at least in his last years he was cared for by his son and his daughter-in-law, Joana Lopez.

According to the death certificate, which is still preserved in Ouro Preto, Antonio Francisco Lisboa died a bachelor aged seventy-six (not eighty-four). It seems that his son was, like himself, illegitimate, but he had not inherited his father's gifts and never became more than an artisan. His son's wife Joana Lopez, a woman of the people and quite uneducated, was still living when Rodrigo Bretas was collecting material for his biography. She told him stories about things which she could hardly have known of at first hand, and José Mariano junior, who doubts her testimony, has also discovered some receipts dated 1796 signed by Aleijadinho in a crude but firm handwriting which could scarcely be that of a man who had lost all his fingers.

On the paternal side Aleijadinho came from a family that hovered between the status of artisan and artist. His father Manoel Francisco Lisboa had worked on the churches being built in the mining district. But in what capacity, as an architect or as a decorator? The answer remains vague. Some attribute to him the Carmo church at Ouro Preto, while others think him only a foreman who had been chosen, as was often the case, from those experienced masons who had great technical but no creative talent.

One thing however is certain, that Aleijadinho was a sculptor and a gifted one. He was employed as an expert (*louvrado*) to inspect the building of several churches (the Carmo of Ouro Preto, the Carmo of Sabará, the parochial church of Morro Grande, and eventually the magnificent church of São Francisco) but only once is he described as an architect, by the vicar of the Indian parish of São Manoel de Pomba, where he measured up the plans of the church. On the other hand there is proof that he was asked to provide a new main doorway for São Francisco in 1774. At the height of his powers he carved the *pedra-sabão* whose beautiful and free motif dominates the decoration of the façade. Probably it was only shortly afterwards that he picked up his dreadful disease, but he worked on to produce the statues at Congonhas, perhaps executing them himself or employing assistants who worked from his designs or under his instructions. His was indeed a tragic state, but it is difficult to verify any details; his passion for his art and the quality of his work both contribute to his almost legendary fame, yet in our present state of knowledge his role as an architect is, to say the least, still questionable.

It is also equally difficult, one can even say impossible, to find out who built the new miners' churches. Perhaps the fact that the monastic orders



were banned allowed the break with a set tradition—though this is to state things too strongly—but at least the break with certain ways of building that had almost become habitual with them. The greatest hindrance to any investigation is the air of mystery which surrounds the actual dates when the buildings were erected. Take, for example, the Church of the Rosary in Ouro Preto: was it one of the most beautiful of the early churches—which would mean that it had been begun about 1750—or does it date from thirty-four years later, when Manuel Francisco of Araujo was paid ten oitavas for designs for the gables and front elevation?<sup>18</sup> The plan comprises a convex fore-part, with three porches and two round towers set back. The elliptical nave opens on to the *capela-mor*; this also is elliptical, though on a smaller scale, and the corridors on either side lead to a rectangular sacristy. There is obviously a similarity to the church of São Pedro of Mariana. And, in a less obvious way, it recalls two small *carioque* churches: Nossa Senhora da Gloria at Outeiro [194] and São Pedro dos Clerigos. The first of these consists of two juxtaposed polygons: a hexagonal nave, a *capela-mor* surrounded by polygonal corridors and the sacristy at the end. In front a little porch and campanile form a very simple elevation. The panelled walls repeat the articulation and the entablature is decorated with small pyramids, but it is the campanile with its cupola that dominates the design. This little church, standing on a hill above the bay of Guanabara, with the whiteness of its rough-cast walls enhanced by the reddish stone of the string coursing and pilasters, forms a harmonious building, which seems to gain by contrast with the skyscrapers rising round the shores of the bay and to have become more and more a small jewel that stands for another age and another civilization.

The church of São Pedros dos Clerigos—one of the confraternity of secular clerks—was unfortunately built in the centre of the old town, for in 1942 Vargas found it an obstruction and quite ruthlessly destroyed it.

The plan consisted of three apses which embraced the nave, a rectangular *capela-mor*, surrounded by corridors and sacristies. The charm of the façade remains unforgettable—the beautiful central curve which swept back to join the two rounded towers, and the two projecting cornices, one in the centre of the building and the second just below the roof. The main door and the two doors beneath the towers were surmounted by fine broken pediments.

These two churches and those of Minas Geraes contrast very strongly with the taste of the previous generation for the monumental, and if one has to put a label on such things it is not surprising that they have been labelled Rococo.

If one questions this appellation it is not because one ignores or belittles details in the ornamentation which are pure *rocaille*, something that Baroque never knew, and which belonged to a later age. But surely the plans and the elevations together show a mastery of the curved line, that tendency to choose an elliptical, polygonal or circular ground-plan which

must surely remind one of traditional Baroque, or Baroque as it was interpreted by Borromini? And is not the impression given by an elliptical nave joining up with the *capela-mor* a reinterpretation of what the Venetians and the Viennese achieved when they began to plan their churches more for surprising effects of perspective than in conformity to architectural logic? These churches of Minas Geraes seem related to those of Salzburg. Or indeed, though with a time lapse of more than a century, one might say that Borromini's style had an Indian summer in these remote colonies; it was not so classical or so monumental a Baroque as that of Bernini, but none the less Roman—and one which cannot be dismissed as an effeminate deviation.

On the other hand it is very difficult to believe that this style, which strikes one immediately as being completely mature, could have evolved from the earlier Brazilian tradition—a tradition that was by no means exhausted and vigorously held its own for many years to come.<sup>19</sup> It would be unwise to overlook the narrow pattern of colonialism at this date. Brazil was strictly dependent on Portugal and, until we have further facts to go on, the consensus of opinion would admit that the churches which were most markedly in the style of Borromini, such as the Rosary, São Francisco in Ouro Preto or the two *carioque* churches, came from Portugal. They were said to have fallen from Heaven like meteorites, a remark that might indicate that the colony was not docile about adopting plans made for them in the mother country.

One must also remember that after Italian artists (or others who had served their apprenticeship in Rome) had come to Portugal, and after the lovely creations of Mafra, the whole kingdom was permeated by a taste for Baroque in the style of Borromini.<sup>20</sup>

This fashion, when it reached Brazil, inspired these very striking works especially in the new mining towns which artistically had no background. It was essential that if they had to appeal to the public, and an uneducated public, they must not be too daring. There was no question of breaking with traditional religious forms. Gilded altars surrounded by masses of flowers and candles and richly-clad statues with a mass of ex-voto offerings or jewels were as popular as the sacristies behind the altar, which would probably be adorned with brightly-coloured azulejos tiles. These things might be novelties, but they made no break with the traditional Baroque of the colony.

It is against this background that the sculpture of Aleijadinho attains its full significance, not only in Brazil but in the history of art. A native, with the mixed blood of the invaders and the native Africans in his veins, had managed to express a quality that is the most striking and unique feature of Brazilian society.

His most moving work is imaginative and pious, and reflects the local feelings of his country. He was able to call upon all the technical skill of European studios and combine it with an individual imagination and taste.



His designs are so charming and vigorous that we can say that he was the first—or one of the first—artists whose talent for decoration rivalled the European masters.

The commission given him for a row of statues for a pilgrimage church, shows how great his technical skill was, and how fertile his imagination. He produced the prophets which flank the stairs leading up to the church of Bom Jesus de Matozinhos at Congonhas do Campo [195]. Putting aside the first impression and the emotional appeal these figures can exercise, it is worth while examining them carefully. The twelve statues constitute a work of art that has been inspired by one idea. But the prophets have nothing about them that would encourage, like a patron saint, familiarity; they are not, one feels, easily accessible, nor have they been modelled after any idealistic form of beauty. The artist has envisaged them quite otherwise. Most of them are strikingly clothed in oriental robes and turbans. One is throwing his head back in the throes of ecstasy; others serenely smile; one spreads out his hands in welcome; another points to the Heavens as though he were invoking lightning and thunder, and there is one who studies some scroll which he has unrolled and is pointing to a particular sentence. Yet, individual as they all may be, they are complementary and the whole composition is quite unique. Any pilgrim who climbs those steep stairs can scarcely avoid, as it were, talking to these figures, who guard the entrance to the church and from whom there is no escape.

But, individually, the differences between the statues are very great. Many look benign: many, on the contrary, have their eyes starting out of their heads and their noses looked pinched. Some wear becoming and elegant garments; others are practically clothed in rags—and the symbols, when it comes to a lion for Daniel or a whale for Jonah are very crudely done. Yet if one ignores the work as a whole and looks at every statue on its own, we are faced with this problem. Was it the work of one man, who as he grew older became more sophisticated; or was it work taken on in haste and carried out by the apprentices of some studio?

These questions may perhaps be answered in time. But there is no denying the feeling that this is a work of art complete in itself, and a landmark in social history. Here one is face to face with Baroque inspiration carried out by a half-caste, between 1780 and 1810; a proof, if ever there was one, of the vitality of the religious and artistic ideals which had arisen in Europe during the sixteenth century. We see how after more than two hundred and fifty years someone could, in spite of a completely different climate and background, reinterpret it. Baroque had shown that it was worldwide in its appeal; let those who wish to write it off as a caprice of decadent artists or, at the best, a petty offspring of a limited sect say what they like. One should remember too that, in this case, people who only knew of Europe by hearsay looked upon European traditions and ideals—even on technical skill—as victimization, and this prejudice had to be overcome.

Aleijandinho's last years coincided with the first moves for indepen-

dence. It is worth noting, however, that religion—first introduced by the monks who were with the conquerors—had by this time become such an integral part of colonial society that Brazilians remained faithful until the final break with Portugal. No one can doubt that the revolutionaries were inspired by a European anti-clerical ideology; nor can one deny that some of the new South American nations reacted violently against the Church and became the scene of religious wars. But the reasons were local, and it was never because Catholicism itself was identified with the mother country. The Church had taken root in Latin America. It still retains its power, and in Brazil we find perhaps one of the most curious results of Baroque.



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## Conclusion

WE owe many things to Baroque art, which was largely inspired by Correggio and Michelangelo: the Rome of Bernini and Borromini, some aspects of Versailles (and superb fêtes like that of *l'Ile Enchantée* which was given there), and the churches of Fischer von Erlach and Dientzenhofer, so it is surely unworthy to dismiss it as decadent or as a deviation from the Renaissance. It is truer to say that it was a derivation from the Renaissance, adapting its lessons to express a new ideal in a society that had radically changed.

The Renaissance in fact had only spoken of beauty, of nature and how to conquer it, and the benefits and progress that might be expected if humanity were wise and reasonable. It did not raise hopes of eternity nor promise everlasting glory to the poor to compensate for their earthly lot. This limitation of its message partly explains why the religious crisis came to a head, leading both to the birth of Protestantism and to the efforts of the Catholic Church to reorganize itself at the Council of Trent. Baroque, the child of the Renaissance, became the interpreter of the Catholic Church and, since even today we are still divided on religious questions, this close alliance has had its disadvantages. It was identified too with the political and social pattern that began to take shape in the sixteenth century and triumphed in the seventeenth, which also called forth no less fervent support and bitter opposition.

On the one hand we find Baroque as the fashion in court circles, on the other hand it was the art favoured by the landed gentry and peasantry. When succeeding generations failed to understand what Baroque was trying to say, one cannot but recognize that it was largely due to its intimate association with institutions that by then had passed away. Or one could even say with equal truth that by appealing to imagination and sensibility, by seeking to arouse emotion rather than satisfy logic or reason, it became the servant of obscure and nebulous human feelings which do not favour progress. It is no doubt because of this that Baroque in general has been written off rather muddle-headedly as a feeble, effeminate style and apt to run riot, so that Classicism arises as a reaction.

If we develop our thesis we see that Baroque, which was at the same time monarchic, aristocratic, religious and attached to the land (using this

term in its widest sense; one had almost been tempted to say 'landowning' instead), managed to take root in some parts of Europe but not in others. It spread widely in countries where there was a hierarchical society that based its whole structure on the labour of peasants who were expected to be docile and resigned. Although Baroque at its most ostentatious and magnificent could add brilliance to an absolute monarchy, it is a fact that the most powerful absolute monarchy of all chose the classical style—though the classical was not unalloyed with traces of Baroque. Its success there was due to the presence of a large middle class, both critical and able to take an interest in abstract reasoning, which found satisfaction in Cartesian philosophy with its desire for universal values superior to ephemeral contingencies. Baroque also found little favour in the Protestant countries, where a commercial economy encouraged calculation and the study of mathematics led to a different mental outlook, quite apart from the fact of the difference in religion. It is also noteworthy that Baroque was accepted with enthusiasm in societies that were largely dependent on the sovereign, such as Russia after 'The Troubles', or the colonies of Latin America. When one sovereign resolved to change this form of society by transforming the peasant virtually into a bourgeois and trying to interest the great landowners in industrial enterprises and the life of a modern State, we find a partial decline of Baroque. Speaking even more generally, technical and scientific progress turned away from the plastic arts where sentiment and imagery had played so great a part. The philosophical thought of the eighteenth century also contributed to the reaction against sentiment, or rather the exaggeration of sentiment in Baroque, and it is not at all surprising that it is associated with the return of classical forms to favour.

In short, Baroque, which had spread over part of Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had been the expression of the contemporary religious, social and political order. It was only to be expected that Baroque should share its decline. Because of that one can perhaps better understand why it has been so harshly condemned. Since whole generations could find nothing to say in favour of the ideal it sought to convey, they rejected it together with the system. They considered Baroque art only as grimacing, contorted and a bag of tricks.

There was still another thing. Religion itself is greater and more durable than its expression, which uses the modes of thought and feeling and the forms of taste that are current at a particular place and time. So it is quite true that Baroque cannot claim to be the expression of Catholicism or Catholic art to the exclusion of other forms, and it is perfectly right and proper that Catholics refuse to accord it any special standing. But it is wrong to believe that it sought to deceive men of a certain period and incautiously gave its blessing to the vanity of the few who lived at the expense of the many. What epoch in social history is free of injustice? Baroque is not responsible for the political or social errors of its patrons.



It is in any case false to say that it only exalted wealth and power, and was indifferent to the common folk or did not seek to understand and relieve their miseries.

Baroque was sincere in its enthusiasms and faith, exalting the imagination and preserving ideals and inventiveness from the danger of too strict formality, for even Classicism could obscure people's vision and lead to the petrification of social forms. Baroque knew how to capture spiritual and emotional forces, which have a validity independent of the historical happenings in seventeenth-century Europe. It is because they have recognized this that some people of our time have given their support to Baroque art. Others have even gone so far as to look for it everywhere and to establish an everlasting Baroque.

In this essay we have determined only to follow up a line that is sufficiently clear. But it is true that the Baroque of modern Europe affords generous forces, which are rewarding for those who can sympathize with and analyse them. They can still satisfy our senses and our hearts and, far from stultifying our spiritual demands, can reanimate them.

The historian's task is to disperse prejudice, to endeavour to place correctly the part which one order played in history, and to disentangle the message that it held for its contemporaries, but by doing this he may possibly also arouse a sympathy and enable a new voice to sound, one that appeared to be dead or to be speaking in an unknown tongue.





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# Notes

## CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup> Today we think of Leonardo da Vinci as the pioneer of scientific method founded on exact observation and mathematical reasoning, rejecting the principle of authority in matters of knowledge. Largely owing to da Vinci, a civilization based on hearsay, receiving its learning from the words of the master, was supplanted by one based on the eye, 'where sight seems to take the first place . . . in the incredible attention given to detail . . . *visus* replaces and supplants *auditus*'. (A. Koyré, *Léonard de Vinci et l'expérience scientifique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, p. 244, Communications du Colloque international du Centre National de la recherche scientifique, 4th-7th July, 1952.)

<sup>2</sup> Romain Rolland, *Michel-Ange*, p. 49 (coll. Les Maîtres Anciens, 1905).

<sup>3</sup> Marcel Reymond is among those who consider that there was a change in the source of Michelangelo's inspiration after the events of 1527 and 1530. (vide *De Michel-Ange à Tiepolo*, p. 44; and his article *L'architecture des tombeaux des Médicis*, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1908.)

<sup>4</sup> Michelangelo did not live to see the completion of the cupola. At the time of his death the drum only was in course of construction. A fresco in the Vatican library (Munoz, *Roma barocca*, p. 2) shows the exterior of the basilica and the drum still open to the sky at the accession of Sixtus V, twenty years later. The existing cupola is the work of Giacomo della Porta, who wished it to be more slender than Michelangelo had intended. Marcel Reymond considers that 'Michelangelo would not have made it as beautiful. In his hands it would have remained heavier, more massive' (*De Michel-Ange à Tiepolo*, p. 48). Letarouilly, *La basilique Saint-Pierre* (English edition Richardson, 1953), fig 39, shows Michelangelo's design after an engraving by Dupérac (1569).

<sup>5</sup> It is in searching to give the Baroque the most noble ancestry that J. Strzygowski discerned as its forerunners Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael himself. He suggests that Raphael's change of style towards the end of his life marked the transition from Renaissance to Baroque, *Das Werden des Barocks bei Raphaël und Correggio* (Strasbourg, 1898), p. 81. Strzygowski appreciated the differences between Raphael and Correggio: indeed they are obvious. But the disadvantage of his point of view, in my opinion, is that it tends to confuse the whole concept of the Renaissance. The danger of denigrating the Renaissance, by assigning its real attributes to Baroque, is emphasized by F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée au temps de Philippe II*, pp. 606 et seq. He refers principally to the study of G. Schnurer, *Katholische Kirche und Kultur in der Barockzeit* (1937).

<sup>6</sup> André Chastel, *L'Art italien*, Volume II, pp. 64 et seq, applies the word 'Mannerism' to sixteenth-century Italian art, between fifteenth-century Renaissance and Baroque. The author throws light on many aspects of this period, but there are certain dangers in using the term 'Mannerism' if it is stretched to mean more than the evolution of the Renaissance.

<sup>7</sup> For details see Marcel Reymond, *De Michel-Ange à Tiepolo*, p. 49, and G. Maury et Percheron, *Itinéraires romains*. For a general discussion of the building of Rome see *L'histoire de l'urbanisme* by P. Lavedan and the thesis by J. Delumeau.

<sup>8</sup> This is the title given to the volume in the collection *Peuples et Civilisations*, by H. Hauser (1932).

<sup>9</sup> F. Braudel, op. cit., p. 503.

<sup>10</sup> Henri Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands, les Ruiz* (Paris, 1953), p. 53.

<sup>11</sup> There is a considerable bibliography on this subject, including the following major works by French historians: Marc Bloch,

*Les caractères originaux de l'histoire rurale française.*

G. Roupnel, *La ville et la campagne au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (2nd edition, 1955), rather than the same author's *Histoire de la campagne française*, in which the question with which we are concerned here is only touched upon. Many observations in Braudel, op. cit., pp. 619 et seq (with references).

J. Delumeau's thesis, *La vie économique et sociale à Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, particularly Chapter II of the second part, from which many examples have been taken. J. Delumeau observes that most of the cardinals' revenues came from landed property and that the great nobles also drew their income from the land. He reminds us that Michelangelo preferred landed property to other investments.

For Central Europe, Josef Pekař, in his admirable study *Kniha o Kosti* (*The book of Kost*) throws light on this evolution. (Kost is a province of northern Bohemia); Kamil Krofta, *Přehled dějin selského stavu v Čechách a na Moravě* (*History of the Peasants in Bohemia and Moravia*) (Prague, 1919); a recent article by Aloïs Mika, *Les grands domaines de la Bohême du Sud du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (*Sborník Historický, Recueil historique*, 1952).

For Russia: G. Grekov, *Krest'iané na Rusi* (*The Peasants in Russia*) (Moscow, 1949-1952); V. B. El'ichevitch, *Istoriia prava pozemel'noi sobstvennosti v Rossii* (*History of the Law of Landed Property in Russia*) (Paris, 1951).

For Poland: J. Rutkowski, *Histoire économique de la Pologne avant les partages* (Paris, 1927).

<sup>12</sup> M. P. Moisy has kindly given me permission to quote this remark from his unpublished thesis.

<sup>13</sup> Single nave: San Marcello, rebuilt after the fire of 1519. The Baroque façade is by Carlo Fontana (1683). Side-chapels between the pillars in churches with three aisles: Sant Agostino, built between 1479 and 1483, and Saint-Louis-des-Français, built between 1518 and 1589.

<sup>14</sup> A detailed study of the influence of the Gesù will be found in the work of M. P. Moisy. In his opinion many of the churches built by the French Jesuits during the seventeenth century adopted the single nave with side-chapels under the influence of the Gesù, but they differed from the Roman church in that alternating pillars and arches were abandoned.

<sup>15</sup> We shall return later to the history of this building. The façade, very different from that of Giacomina della Porta, is the work of P. Derand.

<sup>16</sup> These instructions of Father Mercurian will be published in the work of M. P. Moisy, who has translated them from the original.

See also Duhr, *Geschichte der Jesuiten in den Ländern deutscher Zunge*, Volume I, p. 606, and P. Pirri, *Giovanni Tristano e i primordi della architettura gesuitica* (Rome, Institutum historicum, SJ 1955), p. 41.

<sup>17</sup> For the whole of this question see: P. Lavedan, *Histoire de l'art.—Les temps modernes* (Clio) (good bibliography); Pietro Pirri, SJ, op. cit.; the unpublished thesis of P. Moisy, *Les églises des Jésuites de l'assistance de France*.

## CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup> This façade is often wrongly attributed to Algarde, on the assumption that it dates from 1685. Father Pirri has kindly made available to me his notes on this church. It was begun in 1650, when the façade and the outer walls were completed. A temporary wall was placed at the height of the arch which supports the cupola. After the death of Father Grassi in 1654 the work was interrupted between 1658 and 1684. It was begun again with the construction of the High Altar and the general decoration of the church by Pozzo, author of the celebrated *Triumph of St Ignatius*, which decorates the ceiling. See also: P. Carlo Bricarelli, *Il P. Orazio Grassi, architetto della Chiesa di St Ignazio di Roma* (Civiltà Cattolica, 1922, Volume II, pp. 13-25).

<sup>2</sup> St Peter's is of course the Cathedral church of the diocese of Rome, of which the Pope is bishop. But as the Pope is also the priest of the whole world, the basilica built on the relics of the first of the Apostles is in a way the most important church in Christendom. For the architecture of St Peter's in general, see the work of Letauilly.

<sup>3</sup> L. Hauteccœur, *Mystique et architecture, symbolisme du cercle et de la coupole* (1954), p. 275, recalls that for Nicolas de Cues God is 'sphaera infinita, cujus centrum est ubique, circumferentia nullibi' and that for the theoreticians (Bramante, Léonard, Serlio, and Philibert de l'Orme) the cupola represents the image of the world and symbolizes the infinity of God.



<sup>4</sup> It is curious to observe the cardinals' interest in the secular decoration of their lodgings and their liking for mythological subjects. The two *Aurora* were ordered by two successive cardinal-nephews: the one from Guido by Cardinal Scipio Borghese, nephew of Paul V, and the other from Guercino by Cardinal Ludovisi, nephew of Gregory XV, not without the intention of surpassing the first.

<sup>5</sup> Poussin said that it was one of the three most beautiful pictures in Rome.

<sup>6</sup> On Caravaggio see a work (in the press) by R. Juhan; *Le Caravage à Naples* (Revue des Arts, 1955); W. Friedlander, *Caravaggio Studies* (1955); André Chastel, *Le problème du Caravage* (Critique, November, 1956).

<sup>7</sup> The expression comes from André Péro, *Histoire de l'art*, Volume V, p. 634.

<sup>8</sup> Jean Delumeau, op. cit., explains this picture, after having studied the life of pilgrims in Rome. This work of Caravaggio adorns an altar in the church of Sant Agostino.

<sup>9</sup> There has been much discussion about this triumphant style (see the article, *La signification du Baroque*, by P. Regamey (La Maison-Dieu, Number 26)), but it must be admitted that it was justified by many events. People could easily believe in a relatively early conversion of Japan and China. Missionaries were breaking into black Africa. See Antonio Munoz, op. cit., p. 69, for an account of the conversion of Alvaro, a king from Congo, and of the mission which he sent to the Pope in 1607. Most of the travellers died on the way, victims of the climate. One only, Antonio, reached Rome, where Paul V made him a marquis, but he too died three days later. The Pope had him buried in Santa Maria Maggiore. The tomb was embellished with a bust of Antonio by the sculptor Francesco Caporale, who used black marble for the negro's skin and white marble to represent the eyes.

### CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup> Chantelou, *Journal du voyage du cavalier Bernin*, p. 205. Bernini said that he was born to be a painter rather than a sculptor and that if he had been he would have carried out his work promptly, a task which the difficulty of working the material made impossible for him as a sculptor.

<sup>2</sup> R. Wittkower, *Le Bernin et le baroque romain* (Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1934), emphasizes the spirit of Bernini's sculpture, the

feeling of movement which goes beyond the limits of a block of stone, and the lowering of the barriers which separate the stage from the audience. Making a comparison between Jean de Bologne and Bernini, he contrasts a purely mechanistic conception with an energetic conception of movement.

<sup>3</sup> He executed a bust of Richelieu and a statue of Charles I of England. Queen Henrietta Maria ordered one of herself (which was not carried out) in June, 1639 (Bibliothèque Nationale. Italian manuscripts 2083, Folio 37). He was invited to Paris in the reign of Louis XIII and was probably approached by Chantelou during his visit of 1640. But, anxious as he was to please France, Urban VIII could not part with Bernini at that time.

<sup>4</sup> For example, for the fountain in the Piazza Navona, where the statues of the four rivers were carried out according to his designs by his pupils Ruggi, Baratta and Fancelli.

<sup>5</sup> An almost accidental suicide. Borromini, in bed and ill, pierced himself with his sword in a moment of anger, because his servant refused to give him a light. He had time to receive the last sacrament. He had been so depressed that a few days before he took to his bed he had burnt armfuls of his drawings and plans.

<sup>6</sup> Blondel, *Traité de l'architecture*, Book II, Chapter II, p. 250.

<sup>7</sup> This is particularly true of the church San Carlo (or Carlino) alle Quattro Fontane but also of the Madone-des-Sept-Douleurs, and of La Sapienza. There is an excellent analysis of Borromini's architecture in the short work by Giulio Carlo Argan, *Borromini* (1953), pp. 57 et seq, where the author also makes ingenious and suggestive comparisons between the style of Borromini and that of Caravaggio.

<sup>8</sup> On this subject there is a curious feature worth noticing. The coat of arms with three bees arranged in the form of a V suggests a woman's body: the two upper bees represent the breasts, and the lower bee the navel. On the four bases which support the pillars of the baldacchino, these vague sketches of the breasts and stomach swell to evoke, without any possible doubt, the stages of gestation. Is this a whim of the artist, in the fashion of the Middle Ages? Is it a symbol of birth and life, in the tradition of the Renaissance, such as André Chastel has so ingeniously identified in the Saint Anne of the Louvre?

(*Retorica e Barocco*. Atti del III Congresso

Internazionale dei Studi Umanistici, Venice, 1954, p. 41.)

<sup>9</sup> This beautiful statue of Veronica did not please Bernini, who found it too restless.

<sup>10</sup> This cult of the Holy Lance included virtually the whole of the cult of the Sacré-Cœur, which was to become one of the most striking forms of devotion—and also one of the most contested—of modern Catholicism. Ugo Spirito in his interesting work on *Barocco e Controriforma (Retorica e Barocco)*, op. cit., p. 216) observes that the cult of the Sacré-Cœur has never found a satisfactory artistic expression and that this fact seems to him to reflect a divorce between art and the Church in the history of the Baroque. Bernini interpreted the cult of the Sacré-Cœur effectively. It is expressed indirectly in his statue of St Longinus, but more directly in his astonishing drawing: *Christ crucified, in a sea of blood*, reproduced by Munoz, op. cit., p. 377.

<sup>11</sup> Bernini placed two campaniles over the façade of the Pantheon; these were the celebrated 'ears of a donkey', destroyed only in 1882. Roberto Pane has observed (*Bernini*, p. 26) 'with what calm indifference a man of the XVIIth century, endowed with a great feeling for classical architecture, had no hesitation completely to change the proportions of a church'.

<sup>12</sup> G. C. Argan in his short study, *Borromini*, pp. 85–87, analyses Borromini's style with great judgment. To the Baroque principle of multiple articulation, Borromini opposes the principle of merging spatial shapes; his plan is the result of two opposing forces—centrifugal and centripetal. Again, in the architecture of Borromini, the oval scheme or one tending towards an oval is always the result of merging spatial relations.

<sup>13</sup> Churches with a central plan present, in Bernini's opinion, one grave disadvantage. When the visitor enters directly from the street, he takes several steps under the cupola and can no longer see the whole church. It is advisable, therefore, to give him a breathing-space, by interrupting his progress before he comes in. The little porch of Sant Andrea provides the best solution to this problem.

<sup>14</sup> The appreciation of an outstanding work of art is naturally subjective. For Roberto Pane, the church of Sant Andrea al Quirinale lacks the unity which is the essence of a masterpiece (on account of the chapels which open out of the central ground-plan, and which are in part outside the structure

of the building). 'Consequently,' he adds (op. cit., p. 70), 'the praise given to it by many writers is a traditional tribute of homage rather than a judgment founded on a critical appraisal.' This opinion is very different from that of the author.

<sup>15</sup> Marcel Reymond, *Bernini*, p. 120. When one re-reads the works, written many years ago, of Marcel Reymond, one is struck by the wisdom and truth of his judgments and by his unprejudiced defence of Baroque. By his standards, both supporters and opponents in the quarrel about Baroque use arguments which are irrelevant to the problem.

<sup>16</sup> Roberto Pane (op. cit., p. 45) recalls the description of Frascchetti talking to the crowd, which is dazzled by the throne scintillating with gems and gold and who nonetheless pay Peter's pence. He declares that the naïve amazement of simple souls, bewildered by the golden image of wealth, is in fact a denial of the presence of a real Christian spirit in this alleged masterpiece. If it is accepted that the seventeenth-century Church wished to dazzle people with its riches and saw in this magnificence a source of emotion profitable to itself, the main question to decide is whether Baroque artists satisfied this desire. This is the sole problem for historians of civilization; all other considerations are unimportant.

<sup>17</sup> This figure of Charity brought to Urban VIII much needed respect, one might almost say rehabilitation. The new taxes that the Pope imposed to pay for his buildings made him extremely unpopular in Rome: he was called the 'Excise' Pope. People were angry that he wished to have his statue placed on the Capitol during his lifetime (another work by Bernini). At his death there were ugly scenes, bordering on the blasphemous. This explains the reaction of Innocent X against the enterprises of his predecessor, though in fact he merely substituted others, also costly.

<sup>18</sup> V. Martinelli, *Bernini*, p. 90. 'La tomba barocca ha qui il suo archetipo.'

<sup>19</sup> A. Munoz, op. cit., p. 195.

<sup>20</sup> During the period of Innocent X, Algarde returned to the classical tradition for another tomb in St Peter's, that of Leo XI, the short-lived Pope of 1605, who came between Clement VIII and Paul V, and whose papacy of twenty-seven days inspired nothing more than the most traditional forms of homage. This was an elegant and memorable work, but it was merely an



episode in the history of funeral sculpture in the Baroque period.

<sup>21</sup> Marcel Reymond, *Le Bernin*, p. 135.

#### CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup> Georges Pagès, *La Guerre de Trente Ans* (Paris, Payot, 1939). The German atlas, *Westermanns Atlas zur Weltgeschichte*, Volume III (edited by W. Trillmich and Czybulka, 1953) includes a map of the destruction caused by the Thirty Years' War, based on the work of G. Franz and E. Keyser.

<sup>2</sup> M. Pierre Goubert has published some authoritative studies on the demographic problems of the seventeenth century. See his article in *Annales*, Seventh Year No 4, October-December 1952, *En Beauvaisis, problèmes démographiques du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. He shows that in the country round Beauvais, between 1657 and 1675, that is to say during a period when invasion and military devastation were absent, the average length of life was twenty years ten months, because of the enormous infant mortality and the fact that most of the population died before the age of forty-five. This, it must be emphasized, was during a period of security.

<sup>3</sup> On this question, the pioneer work has been done by Earl Hamilton, *American treasure and the price revolution in Spain, 1501-1650* (1934), and *War and Prices in Spain* (1947).

<sup>4</sup> Marcel Reymond, *De Michel-Ange à Tiepolo*, p. 149. In the same work there is an excellent page on the relationship between riches and beauty: 'Riches are doubtless not the whole of beauty, but they are an element in beauty. If the love of riches is a false and worthless ideal, it must nonetheless be recognized that men have not always admitted this to be so.'

<sup>5</sup> Why was the belief in magic and witchcraft so tenacious? On this subject see the work of E. Delcambre, *Le concept de la sorcellerie dans le duché de Lorraine au XVI<sup>e</sup> et au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* Nancy, 1948-1949 (two volumes); and in collaboration with Professor Jean Lermite, *Un cas énigmatique de possession diabolique en Lorraine au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Elisabeth de Ranfaing, l'énergumène de Nancy* (Nancy, 1956).

<sup>6</sup> There are interesting remarks on this point in *Histoire de l'Église*, Volume 19 (first part), by E. Préclin and Jarry, p. 49: 'The most urgent task was to preach the Gospel to the crowds. The Jesuits distinguished themselves by their zeal... by the skill which they devoted to reaching the people.'

<sup>7</sup> Marquès de Lozoya, *Historia del Arte Hispanico*, Volume IV, pp. 57 and 58. Elie Lambert, *L'art en Espagne et au Portugal*, pp. 80 et seq.

<sup>8</sup> An interesting point of view about the problems of absolute monarchy was put forward in the report by Hartung and Mousnier at the Dixième Congrès International des Sciences Historiques à Rome, in September 1955: *Problèmes concernant la monarchie absolue. Relazioni*, Volume IV (Giunte Centrale per gli Studi Storici (edited by G. S. Sansoni, Florence), p. 41. The authors ask whether there was not a connection between the Baroque tendencies of certain writers and artists and the resistance to absolute monarchy. This view was expounded by M. René Huyghe in a lecture published by the Bulletin de la Société d'étude du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, No 20 (1953), *Du baroque au classicisme*, pp. 274 et seq.

<sup>9</sup> On these French demands see the learned study by Père Blet in the *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, Volume II, April-June 1955: *Article du Tiers aux États généraux de 1614*. (The author is working on an important study about the Assemblies of the Clergy in France from 1615 to 1661, in which the problem of monarchical power will be discussed.)

<sup>10</sup> See the excellent book by Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges* (Strasbourg, 1924), and that of Jean de Pange, *Le roi Très Chrétien* (Paris, 1949).

<sup>11</sup> At the time of the Assembly of 1613 in Russia, the movement in favour of Michael Romanov, a young man descended from former Czars, came from the petty nobility in Government service, from the merchants in the towns of the North, from the Cossacks and from the people of Moscow. It was a Cossack from the Don who first publicized the name of the rightful Czar (in Russian *prirodnyi*), Michael Fedorovitch. (Klioutchevsky, *Kours rousskoï istorii*, Volume III, p. 77.)

<sup>12</sup> *Testament politique*, edited by Louis André (1946).

<sup>13</sup> Bossuet, *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Écriture Sainte*, Book X.

<sup>14</sup> On the nobility: P. Sagnac, *La formation de la société française moderne*, Volume I, *La Société et la monarchie absolue* (Paris, 1945). Vicomte de Marsay, *De l'âge des privilèges au temps des vanités* (Paris, 1932). Evidence about particular cases: Paul de Roussiers, *Une famille de hobereaux pendant six siècles* (Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1935).

Duc de Lévis-Mirepoix, *Aventures d'une famille française* (Paris, La Palatine, 1955). Interesting enquiries into the nobility were published in the *Annales d'Histoire Économique et Sociale*, Volume VIII (1936). Between 1919 and 1939 Czech historians were particularly interested in the problem of the nobility. They were influenced by the work of J. Pekař, *Kniha o Kosti*, I-II (second edition), *Bílá Hora* (1921), *Valdštejn* (1934) and, despite the polemical nature of the book, *Omyly a nebezpečí pozemkové reformy* (Mistakes and Dangers in Agricultural Reform) (Prague, 1923), remarkable studies of the links between the nobility and the land. Dr Jan Muk, *Po stopách národního vědomí české šlechty pobělohorské* (Signs of National Feeling among the Czech Nobility after the battle of the White Mountain) (Prague, 1931), p. 159. Zdeněk Kalista, *Mladí Humprechta Jana Černína z Chudenic, zrození barokního Kavalira* (The Youth of Humprechta-Jean Cernin z Chudenic, the Formation of a Baroque Knight).

<sup>15</sup> At the beginning of the war against Spain, Richelieu and his colleagues had unprecedented difficulty in keeping the nobles in the army for more than a certain number of weeks. In 1638, the Cardinal's own brother-in-law, the Maréchal de Brézé, commanding the army of Champagne, asked to be allowed to return home to Anjou, and used his lack of wealth as an excuse, in addition to his health (Avenel, *Lettres de Richelieu* VI, 84). Montglat in his memoirs hints that the marshal wanted to retire to his estates in Anjou to hunt and to defend his hunting rights against neighbouring nobles.

<sup>16</sup> On the bourgeoisie, in addition to the classic work of W. Sombart, *Der Bourgeois* (1913), see P. Sagnac, *La formation de la société française moderne*, Volume I, *La société et la monarchie absolue* (Paris, 1945). Émile Mâle, *La vie quotidienne au temps de Louis XIII*, based on unpublished documents (Paris, 1942).

On the provincial bourgeoisie: J. M. Richard, *La vie privée dans une province de l'Ouest: Laval au XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1922), G. Roupnel, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Antoine Adam, *Histoire de la littérature française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Volume II, p. 79.

<sup>18</sup> Jacques Scherer, *La Dramaturgie classique en France*, where there is an excellent page on the passion for the theatre (p. 160).

<sup>19</sup> Lucien Febre in the preface to *Séville et l'Atlantique 1504-1650*, by Huguette and Pierre Chaunu, pp. XIII and XIV.

<sup>20</sup> *Testament politique*, edited by André, p. 212. On the Jesuits' teaching, see the studies by R. P. de Dainville, *Foyers de culture scientifique dans la France méditerranéenne* (Revue d'histoire des sciences, Volume I, pp. 289-300).

*L'enseignement des mathématiques dans les collèges jésuites de France du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Volume 7, pp. 6-21 and 109-121).

<sup>21</sup> Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal*, Volume IV, p. 322.

## CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup> If the limits of this book had permitted, I would have liked to describe more fully the evolution of literary taste and the arts during the first half of the seventeenth century, from Henri IV to the deaths of Richelieu and Louis XIII. There are, however, many excellent works to which the reader may refer.

On literature, R. Lebègue was one of the first to discuss French Baroque. See his articles: *Le théâtre baroque en France* (Bibl. d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 1942). *Les larmes de Saint-Pierre, Poème Baroque* (Revue des Sciences humaines, July-December, 1949). The introduction to the series of lectures *Du baroque au classicisme* (XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, No 20, 1953). *L'histoire de la littérature française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, by Antoine Adam, is the best documented and most suggestive work on this problem (Volume I, *L'époque de Henri IV et Louis XIII*). By the same author: *Théophile de Viau et la libre pensée française en 1620* (Paris, Droz, 1936).

O. Nadal, *Le sentiment de l'amour dans l'œuvre de Pierre Corneille* (Paris, Gallimard, 1948).

J. Scherer, *La dramaturgie classique en France* (Paris, Nizet).

René Bray, *La formation de la doctrine classique en France* (Paris, Hachette, 1927).

Henry Carrington Lancaster, *A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore, 1929-42), 9 volumes: Volume I, The pre-classical period 1610-1634, 2 parts. Volume II, The period of Corneille 1635-1651, 2 parts.

R. Fromilhague, *La vie de Malherbe, apprentissages et luttes, 1555-1610* (Paris, Colin, 1954).

R. Fromilhague, *Malherbe, technique et création poétique* (Paris, Colin, 1954).

Marcel Reymond, *Baroque et Renaissance poétique* (Paris, Corti, 1955).

Louis Batiffol, *Richelieu et Corneille* (Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1936).



On the arts: L. Hauteœur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France*, Volume I, part 2.

A. Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France 1500-1700*.

B. Dorival, *La peinture française* (Paris, Larousse, 1942).

A. Mabilde de Poncheville, *Philippe de Champaigne* (Paris, 1938).

F. G. Pariset, *Georges de la Tour* (Paris, 1948), a revealing book.

F. G. Pariset, *Jacques Callot* (A guide to the exhibition on the third centenary of the death of Callot) (Nancy, 1935).

F. G. Pariset, *Articles on Jacques de Bellange* (Archives Alsaciennes de l'Histoire des Arts, 1934; Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français, 1955), on Georges Lallemant (Gazette des Beaux-Arts, July, 1954), and on Claude Deruet (Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1952).

Michel Faré, unpublished thesis, *La Nature Morte en France*.

W. Friedlaender, *The Drawings of Nicolas Poussin* (London, 1939-1953).

P. Jamot, *Connaissance de Poussin* (Munich, 1914).

E. Magne, *Nicolas Poussin, premier peintre du Roi* (sixth edition, Paris, 1928).

G. Lewis, *Descartes et Poussin* (XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, No 23, 1954).

<sup>2</sup> On this point the suggestive article by Pierre Moisy, *Martellange, Derand et le conflit du baroque*, monumental bulletin (Société Française d'Archéologie), Volume CX, 1952, third part, pp. 237-261, and the discussion with E. J. Ciprut (XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, No 23, 1954); also *L'architecte François Derand, jésuite lorrain* (Revue de l'histoire de France, Volume XXXVI, July-December, 1950). These studies are included in Moisy's authoritative thesis, which has already been mentioned.

M. Chardon, *Amateurs d'art et collectionneurs manceaux du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: les frères Fréart de Chantelou* (Le Mans, 1867), p. 202.

On the theory of the circle, see the works of Fréart de Chambray, *Parallèle de l'architecture antique et moderne* (second edition, 1702) and *Idée de la perfection de la peinture* (Le Mans, 1662).

<sup>3</sup> On the Italian festivals, see Gerardo Guerrieri's preface to the catalogue for the Venice exhibition of 1951: *Il secolo dell'invenzione teatrale*.

<sup>4</sup> A. Uccelli, *Storia della tecnica* (Milan, 1943).

A. Wolf, *History of Science, Technology and*

*Philosophy*, Volume I, *The XVIth and XVIIth Centuries* (London, 1950).

<sup>5</sup> A. Chastel, *Léonard de Vinci et l'expérience scientifique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, CNRS, 1952).

<sup>6</sup> H. Prunières, *L'opéra en France avant Lulli* (Paris, 1913).

Romain Rolland, *Musiciens d'autrefois* (Paris).

<sup>7</sup> Corneille, *Œuvres complètes*, *Andromède* (1650). The quotations are taken from the explanation that accompanies the play. On *Andromède* and the works of Corneille in general during the regency of Anne of Austria, see A. Adam, *Histoire de la littérature française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* and O. Nadal, *Le sentiment de l'amour dans l'œuvre de Pierre Corneille*. The figures quoted in the text are given by A. Adam and taken from the *Journal* of Dubuisson-Aubenay.

<sup>8</sup> On the ballet of Les Noces de Pelée et Thétys, see Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes Ib 2; H. Prunières, *Le ballet de cour avant Benserade et Lulli* (Paris, 1913).

<sup>9</sup> In the Archives Nationales, Paris, H<sup>1</sup> 2012<sup>b</sup>, will be found the contracts between the city and Regnaudin and Fleurant le Noir signed by the mayor, Alexandre de Sève. Regnaudin received a fee of 1,000 livres tournois, 300 when the contract was signed, 300 when half the work was done, and 400 when it was completed. Fleurant le Noir received a fee of 1,400 livres tournois, in instalments of 600, 400 and 400, with the right to take away his timber after the festival. Thomas Regnaudin, son of a stone mason, was born in 1622, and died in 1706. He was a pupil of Anguier, with whom he worked on the tomb of the Constable of Montmorency. In 1669 he made a tour of Italy.

<sup>10</sup> The city of Paris arranged for an official account of the day to be published in a work decorated with engravings by Jean Marot. A copy bound in red morocco and stamped with the royal arms is kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pd 43. It is entitled *L'entrée triomphante de leurs Majestés Louis XIV roi de France et Navarre et Marie-Thérèse d'Autriche, son épouse, dans la ville des rois, capitale de leur royaume, en retour de la signature de la paix générale et de leur heureux mariage, enrichie de plusieurs figures, de harangues et de diverses pièces considérables pour l'histoire, le tout exactement recueilli par l'ordre des Messieurs de la ville et imprimé l'an MDCLXII avec privilège du roi*. This work provides the principal source for the account of the festival.

<sup>11</sup> The picture by Le Brun is in the Louvre. All the details correspond to the description of the royal entry, so that there is no possible doubt as to its subject. But it was long thought to represent the entry of the Chancellor to Paris after the repression of the Normandy rising (see Victor-L. Tapié, *La France de Louis XIII et Richelieu*, p. 494). The Grenoble museum contains a very fine work by Van der Meulen showing the royal procession crossing the Pont-Neuf the following day on the way to celebrate Te Deum at Notre Dame.

<sup>12</sup> P. Cossart (really Gaussart), *La magnifique entrée*, 1660 (in doggerel), quarto, 7 pages, Bibliothèque Nationale Y<sup>2</sup> 2402.

<sup>13</sup> The agreement with Fleurant le Noir (Archives Nationales H<sup>2</sup> 2012<sup>b</sup>) states: 'sera fait le dit arc on portiq de menuiserie . . . ainsi qu'il est porté par le dessin qui on a esté fait par le sieur Melin, peintre ordinaire du Roi et paraphé par les dicts sieurs prévost des marchands et échevins'. The official record recalls that this arch was designed by the sieur Melin.

<sup>14</sup> The inscription reads:

'Ludovico Adeodato et Mariae Theresae Christianiss. pacific. aug. opt. max. Orbe nuptiis pacato, urbe adventu recreata  
Votis publicis, votis aeternis Summa omnium ordinum alacritate susceptis D.N.M. Q. eorum cives L.M.P.P.'

<sup>15</sup> Pamphlets, explanatory leaflets and various accounts of the festival will be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, in the series Lb 3729, numbers 3.360 to 3.388.

Lb 37 3.374:

*Les devises générales et particulières des tableaux, figures en relief, plate peinture et médailles qui sont aux portes et portiques des Arcs de triomphe élevés à la gloire de Louis XIV, roy de France, aux faux bourg et Porte Saint-Antoine, cymetière Saint-Jean, Pont Nostre-Dame, marché neuf et place Dauphine-à Paris, 'chez J. P. Loyson, avec privilège du roi'.*

The author complains of having been forestalled in his scheme, seeks to discredit an *Explication générale*, which has already appeared, and boasts of 'His Majesty's permission'.

His translations are pedantic and far-fetched: he takes twenty-eight verses to translate eight lines of the inscription on the obelisk.

Lb 37 3.375:

*La description des Arcs de triomphe eslevés dans les Places publiques pour l'entrée de la Reyne*

*avec la véritable explication en prose et en vers des figures, ovales, termes et portraits de tous les roys de France, qui sont dessus le Pont Notre-Dame ensemble diverses remarques curieuses et particulières pour les amateurs de l'histoire et l'ordre que Leurs Majestés observeront dans leur marché depuis Vincennes jusqu' au Louvre. 'At Paris, chez J. B. Loyson, Rue Saint-Jacques, près la Poste à la croix royale, MDCLX, avec privilège du Roy.'* (The right granted in May to François Colletet had been made over to Loyson.)

This is a sort of programme, but in describing the royal statues on the bridge of Notre Dame, it gives the reader a history of France. For example, here are his observations on Charles IX (p. 18); it will be noticed that he does not mention the events of St Bartholomew's day:

'LVIII (58<sup>e</sup> roi de France) Charles IX. Justitiam pietas acuit. Et son bras fut l'effroi des esclaves du vice (a general paraphrase). La bataille de Dreux, où le Roy de Navarre fut tué, la deux, trois et quatrième guerre civile, les édits de pacification, le siège de la Rochelle, son voyage à Bayonne et celui de la Guyenne furent les principales choses qui se passèrent pendant les quatorze années de son règne.'

Lb 37 3.377:

*L'explication générale de toutes les peintures, statues, et tableaux des portiques et arcs de triomphe, dressés pour l'entrée du roi et de la reine, tant au faubourg et porte Saint-Antoine qu'aux places publiques, pont Notre-Dame, marché neuf, avec une description de la belle et magnifique pyramide de la Place Dauphine et son amphithéâtre, ensemble toutes les devises et inscriptions Latines expliquées en français de la marche de Leurs Majestés depuis Vincennes jusqu'au Louvre. Paris, Cardin Besongne, 1660.*

This is the pamphlet attacked by the author of the 'Devises générales et particulières'.

<sup>16</sup> There is a slight mystery about the Vigarani's connection with this.

Gabriel Rouchès in the *Inventaire des lettres et papiers manuscrits de Gaspare, Carlo et Ludovico Vigarani conservés aux Archives d'État de Modène 1634-1684* (Paris, 1913), analyses a letter from Ludovico Vigarani to the Duchess of Modena, Laure Martinozzi, a niece of Mazarin. Gaspare Vigarani had erected the triumphal arches for the king's entry into Paris. The arches, particularly that at the Porte Saint-Antoine (letter 38, 16th October, 1660, p. 106), won congratulations. What significance should be at-



tached to 'erect' and what was Vigarani's part in the execution of this work? The author of the account does not give the name of the builder of the arch at the Porte-Saint-Antoine. I had originally imagined that it was Blondel. In fact, Blondel reconstructed the arch in 1671, enlarging it with new doorways, but he kept all the original decorations (statues, pyramids and inscriptions). In the fourth part, Book XII, Chapter II of his *Traité d'architecture*, Blondel outlines the work he did to rehabilitate the Porte Saint-Antoine which, he said, had served as a triumphal arch for Henri II and was embellished by figures of rivers by Jean Goujon (the Marne and the Seine). It is surprising that he does not mention the events of August 20th, since on that day the Porte Saint-Antoine was finished and the statues of Anguier, Van Obstal, etc, were placed upon it. Does not this silence suggest that he did not wish to mention Vigarani? Moreover, in 1660 Vigarani was occupied with building the Théâtre des Tuileries which was making slow progress. He complained of the slowness of the French workmen, who were devoting so much enthusiasm to carrying out the works for the royal entry. In any case the projects for the other triumphal arches were certainly not the responsibility of the Vagarinis, who can have played only a very small part in the preparations for the festival. The arch reconstructed by Blondel was demolished in 1778; the statues by Anguier are now in the Musée Carnavalet.

<sup>17</sup> The programme of the fête announced that the King and Queen would stop at the Cathedral to offer up prayers. In fact, this halt did not take place, because it was realized that it would hold up the procession. The royal couple should have returned to Notre Dame in the evening to hear the Te Deum. But this was postponed to the following day, either because of a deliberate decision, or because of the length of time taken by the procession and the late hour at which it reached the Louvre.

<sup>18</sup> In the Bibliothèque Nationale there is a brochure, entitled *Description de l'arc de la place Dauphine, présentée à Son Eminence*, Paris, Pierre le Petit, MDCLX, with permission. The brochure is anonymous, but this copy has the signature of Félibien on p. 16. It provides the only complete explanation of the monument. A fine engraving, which has unfortunately been torn from the binding, gives a detailed picture of the

triumphal arch and the obelisk. It is known that Le Brun's design was carried out by Person, Hallé, Francur, Lhomme and Bacot.

<sup>19</sup> Reproductions of the triumphal arches of the Marché and of the Place Dauphine will be found in L. Hauteccœur, Volume III, pp. 241 and 242.

<sup>20</sup> The description of the arches ends with a passage which deserves quotation.

It was announced—wrongly—that the procession would arrive at the Louvre only at nightfall and that this would be the signal: 'pour allumer les lanternes aux fenêtres, les feux dans toutes les rues, pendant que les canons, les mortiers et les boîtes feront un agréable tintamarre dans l'air et sembleront dire en leur langage qui leur (sic) est bien plus doux de tonner au triomphe et au mariage de notre grand monarque qu'aux combats et aux campagnes de la guerre'.

<sup>21</sup> G. Mongrédien, *L'Affaire Fouquet* (Hachette, 1956). This learned study by a scholar of seventeenth-century history enables one to understand how the superintendent, while accumulating his own fortune, remained the only person capable, because of his sources of credit, of providing the Treasury with the help it needed in extreme difficulty. Moreover, the most important people in the kingdom, including the Queen Mother herself (for her poor, it is true), accepted pensions and presents in kind from him.

<sup>22</sup> L. Hauteccœur, op. cit., Volume II<sup>2</sup>, pp. 101 et seq. Tradition was respected in the general appearance of the château, with its side pavilions. Innovation came from a more ingenious and intimate arrangement of the rooms, in twos or threes, and the presence of a bathroom.

The great oval drawing-room is reminiscent of that in the Barberini palace.

<sup>23</sup> Molière, *Œuvres complètes*, Volume I (Pléiade edition, p. 402). These verses are taken from the Prologue to the *Fâcheux*, a comedy performed at Vaux, on August 17th, 1671. They were addressed to the King by a water-nymph, emerging from a shell in the middle of twenty jets of water, who 'with a heroic air, recited the verses that Monsieur Pelisson had written and which formed the prologue'. Pelisson was arrested and imprisoned a few days later as a friend and collaborator of Fouquet.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> It may be said that Louis XIV was only carrying out his duty in punishing an untrustworthy minister. But it is also true that

in the words of the Queen Mother 'he liked to be rich and did not like those who were richer than himself'. Up to the last moment, when all the details of the arrest had been planned, he loaded Foucquet with gifts and seemed to show him complete confidence. Louis XIV was convinced that great affairs could only be conducted in secrecy, and because of his great responsibilities, he justified himself in placing himself outside the ordinary moral code.

<sup>26</sup> On the Tuileries, see L. Hauteccœur, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>27</sup> On *Ercole amante*, see H. Prunières, *L'opéra italien en France avant Lulli* and Romani Rolland, *Musiciens d'autrefois*.

<sup>28</sup> Louis XIV ordered that an exact account should be compiled of the *Plaisirs de l'île enchantée*, adorned with engravings. We have studied this account, of which the complete text is reproduced in volume I of the works of Molière, published according to the edition of 1682 in the Pléiade collection by Maurice Rat.

<sup>29</sup> *La Princesse d'Elide* is included in the repertoire of the Comédie-Française, and was last performed in 1946, with Jean-Louis Barrault taking the part of Moron. The difficulties to be overcome in producing the spectacle of 1664 can be appreciated if reference is made to the Pléiade edition of Molière.

## CHAPTER VI

<sup>1</sup> The expression 'Pavillon du roi' was first applied to the pavilion built by Lescot, but later it seems to have been extended to cover the whole of the south wing. The garden today extends only to a few flower beds along the small gallery, but in the seventeenth century, it consisted of a pleasant park, with beautiful trees. It was later known as the Infanta's garden, because the Infanta Mariannita-Victoire, daughter of Philippe V, came to play there when, as she was being brought up in France in order to become the wife of the young King Louis XV, she was living at the Louvre. The engagement was later broken to permit Louis XV to marry Marie Leczzyńska. The princess was brought back to Spain and later married the King of Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> This is more or less the present situation of the Pavillon Lesdiguières.

<sup>3</sup> At this date Molière had to leave the theatre where his plays were performed because the building was demolished.

<sup>4</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, *Mélanges Col-*

bert, 120 bis, f°561. Letter in Italian from Bernini to Colbert, May 4th, 1664.

<sup>5</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, *Mélanges Colbert*, 121 bis, f°861. Letter from Bernini to Colbert, June 23rd, 1664: 'assicurando lo (Colbert) che se avesse potuto operare il desiderio independentemente dall'arte, habebbe parterito un palazzo digne di S. Mta'.

<sup>6</sup> L. Hauteccœur, *Le Louvre et les Tuileries, Histoire du Louvre*, published by L'illustration, gives the plans and design for the Louvre, pp. 56, 57, 58.

<sup>7</sup> Colbert's mémoire is published in Volume V of the *Lettres, instructions et mémoires de Colbert*, published by Clément, pp. 246-250. The plan of the first design is reproduced by Roberto Pane, *op. cit.*, fig. 164. The elevation is reproduced in the same work, fig. 163, and in L. Hauteccœur, *Histoire du Louvre*, p. 57.

<sup>8</sup> These courtyards were 4½ 'toises' square in area. They presented in fact a complicated design, difficult to describe, but very logical, if one looks at the plan. Surrounded by walls on three sides, the fourth side was open; in front was the curve of the concave gallery.

<sup>9</sup> There is no trace of it in Paris. In the Tessin collection, Stockholm, is a drawing attributed to Bernini which may form part of the second project; it is an elevation, not a plan. Bernini may have given it to Tessin the younger when the Swedish architect was staying in Rome. Although it can probably be attributed to Bernini, there is no absolute proof. See the article by Josephson, mentioned later. The Stockholm drawing is reproduced in Roberto Pane's book, fig. 165.

<sup>10</sup> Roberto Pane, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>11</sup> The question of security was essential to the Louvre. It remained one of Colbert's great objections to Bernini's various plans. A Soviet historian, B. F. Porchnev, struck by this insistence, has argued that the royal government, being imposed by force, had always to reckon with popular risings. See this book *Narodnié vosstaniia vo Francii pri Kol'berte* (Popular risings in France during the time of Colbert), p. 389. Porchnev has studied urban revolts in different countries during the seventeenth century. It is obvious that they could always be expected in Paris, where the Froude and the attempt against Henri IV had taken place. But at all times, in all countries and under all regimes, measures must be and are taken to guarantee the personal safety of members of the Government. It was natural for Colbert to do his. While the royal apartments were as secure



as possible in the south wing, they would have been more vulnerable and would have been exposed to all sorts of risks and difficulties if they had been placed in the east wing, unless the surroundings had been cleared by expropriating and levelling existing buildings, the cost of which would have been exorbitant.

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps Colbert had begun to resign himself to this in Bernini's time, if a phrase reported by Chantelou can be thus interpreted: 'Il (Colbert) lui avait fait entendre (au Bernin) que l'appartement du Roi ne pouvait être qu'au lieu où il est.' (*Journal*, p. 264.) But did Colbert say this when the plans had been abandoned and he wished to place the responsibility on Bernini's obstinacy in making no concessions to other people's views?

<sup>13</sup> All this is clearly set out in the works of L. Hauteccœur (*Histoire de l'architecture classique, Le Louvre et les Tuileries, Histoire du Louvre*). The façade of the south wing finished by Le Vau became a partition wall. But it was necessary to enlarge the pavilions at the corner of the colonnade planned in 1667, in order to bring the south-east one to the level of the south façade of which it formed the angle and in order to maintain the symmetry of the other side.

As to the colossal fore-part that Bernini sacrificed in his plans (see below), Le Vau destroyed it in his turn. He replaced the existing fore-part with a pediment which recalls the design of the pediments of the east façade.

<sup>14</sup> For Bernini's journey to Paris, Chantelou's *Journal* is the principal source (edited by Lalanne, first edition of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1885, and second edition by G. Charensol, Stock 1930). There is also an Italian translation by St Bottari (1946), and a German translation by H. Rose (Monaco, 1919). Two important articles: Ed. Esmonin, *Le Bernin et la construction du Louvre* (*Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français*, 1911); L. Mirot, *Le Bernin en France, les travaux du Louvre et les statues de Louis XIV* (*Mémoires de la société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Isle de France*, Volume XXXI, 1904, pp. 169-288). Mirot's article adds to the documentation of the *Journal* and provides ample information about the visit to Paris. Esmonin's article, in a closely reasoned analysis, emphasizes the relations between Colbert and Bernini after the latter's departure and refutes the theory that the plans were abandoned as early as October 1665. See also L.

Hauteccœur, *Le Louvre et les Tuileries*, pp. 158 et seq.

<sup>15</sup> This engraving forms the frontispiece to the book by F. Baldinucci, *Vita del Cav. L. Bernini* (Florence, 1862). It is reproduced in the book by Stanislas Frascchetti, *Il Bernini* (1900), also as the frontispiece, and in that by Munoz, *Roma barocca*, p. 378. But the modern reproductions have not the life of Baldinucci's engraving.

<sup>16</sup> Caricature of Bernini: *un cavalier française*, in V. Martinelli, *Bernini*, p. 150.

<sup>17</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Carlo Vigarani notes this in a letter to the Duchess of Modena, dated June 19th, 1665 (G. Rouchès, op. cit.).

<sup>19</sup> Colbert, *Lettres et instructions*, edited by Clément, Volume V, p. 251 et seq. The date indicated—1664—is obviously a mistake. Mirot corrects it: August 13th, 1665. The context proves that it concerns a note drawn up by Colbert for Bernini during the latter's stay in Paris.

<sup>20</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>21</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 74, 30th July.

<sup>24</sup> Mirot, op. cit., p. 231; the text can be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Italian manuscripts 2083.

<sup>25</sup> The final plan (see above, p. 208) makes it clear how he solved this difficulty. The quadrangle is formed by the three existing pavilions: that by Le Vau on the south, that by Lescot and by Lemercier (the Clock pavilion) on the west and a third similar one on the north. The east side is closed by a gallery. Beyond this gallery is a space occupied by two courtyards, divided by a peristyle; beyond that is the pavilion. The front and the dome of the pavilion appear to be in the centre of the wing when one is in the courtyard, but not when one is outside.

<sup>26</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>27</sup> Chantelou, op. cit., p. 76. Jean-Louis Vaudoyer recalls that 'Palladio was more interested in his plans and elevations than in their execution. Architects in those happy times confided the carrying out of their ideas to subordinates, and it is claimed that L. B. Alberti, for example, never went to Rimini to see the Malatesta temple which he had designed' (*Les délices de l'Italie*, p. 45). It is understandable, therefore, that Bernini should be so surprised by Colbert's demands.

<sup>28</sup> In the *Comptes des Bâtiments du Roi*, edited by Guiffrey, Volume I, p. 102, the

year 1665: 'Au Sr. Varin pour son paiement d'une médaille d'or qu'il a fait mettre sur les fondations du Louvre: 1,199 livres.'

<sup>29</sup> The symbolism of these statues (designed by Le Hongre) particularly pleased Louis XIV. The hero of strength and toil guarded the gate to his palace and recalled the great undertakings of his reign and the deeds to be accomplished in order to be worthy of approaching it.

<sup>30</sup> The same is true of the side façade. But it presents many curious features. It is not symmetrical; there is a little pavilion, then a larger one set back, then the central building and another pavilion set back; these are the older pavilions of Lescot and Le Vau raised by one storey. In order to join up with the big pavilion at the corner, there is a narrow pavilion three storeys high and one window in width. It is not possible to describe all the details here. These peculiarities reveal the effort to enlarge the corner pavilions of the east façade and make them more habitable, and also to level the old buildings of the east façade built before the old quadrangle.

<sup>31</sup> Chantelou, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

<sup>32</sup> That is, the Pantheon in Rome.

<sup>33</sup> Chantelou, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

<sup>34</sup> Bernini was easily moved. This is not surprising when one thinks of the character of his work. He flew into a passion as quickly as he relented. One of his most furious scenes during his stay in Paris occurred during a conversation with Perrault. The latter casually asked him for accounts for the two sides of the pavilion facing the river, finding that they did not correspond. Bernini said that he had made no mistakes, that Perrault was not worthy of cleaning the soles of his shoes so far as an architectural plan was concerned, and that he was going to complain to the King and go away. Perrault was in despair. The next day Bernini came to offer his apologies which Perrault accepted with good grace. (Chantelou, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-207.)

<sup>35</sup> Guiffrey in his edition of *Comptes des bâtiments du Roi*, Volume I, p. 105, gives the following details:

au Sr. Cavalier Bernin, par gratification et en considération de son mérite et des desseins qu'il a faits pour le Louvre:

33,000 livres

au Sr. Paulo Bernin, par gratification:

6,000 livres

au Sr. Mathias (de Rossi) qui doit exécuter les desseins du dit Sr. Cavalier Bernin

par gratification: 6,000 livres  
au Sr. Julio, eslève en sculpture du Sr. Cavalier Bernin, *idem*: 1,200 livres  
au Sr. Barberet, servant à interpréter et à traduire de français en italien les mémoires nécessaires pour le dit Sr. Cavalier: 900 livres

au Sr. Mancine, qui a accompagné le dit Sr. Cavalier Bernin durant son voyage en France et qui retourne le conduire à Rome: 2,000 livres  
et encore (*ibidem* p. 115):

la somme de 7,451 livres 9 sols pour l'entier paiement des despeses qui ont été faites pour la nourriture du Sr. Cavalier Bernin pour travailler aux desseins du Louvre, depuis son départ jusqu'à son retour en sa maison:

7,451 livres 9 sols

<sup>36</sup> After Bernini's departure it was rumoured that he had gone away dissatisfied. Colbert seemed very concerned about this. He accepted Chantelou's offer to write to Bernini at Lyons to ascertain his feelings. Bernini replied on 30th October that it would be seen by his actions rather than by his words that he remained 'obligato e innamorato di un sì gran Ré' (*Journal*, pp. 258-260).

<sup>37</sup> Colbert, *Lettres* (Clément edition), Volume V, p. 269.

<sup>38</sup> In the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale there is a collection of engravings by Sébastien Leclerc in two volumes. In Folio 53 of the first volume is a medallion representing Bernini's design for the Louvre with this title: '*Majestati ac aeternit. Gall. Imperii Sacrum.*' The seven wonders of the world figure in the surrounding decoration. Thus the King's palace was held to equal or surpass the most beautiful monuments of the ancient world.

<sup>39</sup> In Blondel, *Architecture française*, Volume IV, will be found a criticism of Bernini's plans for the Louvre.

<sup>40</sup> On this point see the articles by Mirot and Esmonin.

<sup>41</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Italian manuscripts 2083, letter from Colbert to Bernini, 31st December, 1666.

<sup>42</sup> Ragnar Josephson, *Les Maquettes du Bernin pour le Louvre* (Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1928, Volume LXX), p. 77.

<sup>43</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Italian manuscripts 2083, f°. 243, letter from Colbert to Bernini, 15th July, 1667: 'Le Roi a eu beaucoup de regret de n'avoir pu faire exécuter le beau dessein que vous lui aviez donné



pour son bastiment du Louvre, mais sa Majesté considérant qu'il était difficile de s'embarquer dans une entreprise aussi considérable que celle-là dans la conjoncture présente d'une guerre par terre et par mer dont la durée étant incertaine aurait pu y causer quelque interruption et que d'ailleurs sa Majesté ayant besoin d'estre logée, elle s'est veue dans la nécessité de faire continuer le dessein qui a esté commencé par ses ancestres et qui peut estre achevé dans le cours de deux ou trois années, se réservant de faire un jour exécuter vostre dessein et de choisir pour cela quelque scituation avantageuse et proportionnée à sa grandeur et à sa magnificence, de quoy elle ne désespère pas que vous n'en veniez reconnoître le scituation et mesmes prendre la conduite et luy donner encore une fois la joye de vous voir travailler avec tant de conduite et de bon succès. Au reste, Monsieur, je vous rends mil grâces du soin que vous prenez de notre Académie. Le Sr. Errard m'escrit que nos jeunes estudians proffittent extraordinairement de vos corrections et que la bonté que vous avez de prendre quelques fois le cizeau et le marteau et de donner quelques coups à leurs ouvrages les encourage beaucoup.'

<sup>44</sup> See P. Lavedan, *Histoire de l'art* (Collection Clio: *Le Moyen Age et l'art moderne*), pp. 396-397; M. Reymond *Le Bernin*, pp. 146 et seq; the articles already mentioned by Mirot and Esmonin. L. Hauteccœur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France* (Volume II<sup>1</sup>), p. 282, sees the real reason for Bernini's defeat in his contempt for the requirements of the programme. Roberto Pane, op. cit., p. 106, note 1, discusses M. Reymond's opinion that 'les Français étaient sous la dépendance des idées classiques de la Renaissance' (loc. cit., p. 146). For him, on the other hand, Bernini is the last messenger of the Renaissance and what the French understood by Renaissance Classicism was not its spirit but its details.

<sup>45</sup> Mirot, article quoted, p. 276.

<sup>46</sup> Esmonin, whose article has already been mentioned, observes that many of the documents which could have thrown light on the reasons for the decision have been lost. Colbert's papers are not complete after 1667 and two volumes of documents about the colonnade were destroyed in the fire at the Louvre Library during the Commune of 1871.

<sup>47</sup> Chantelou (op. cit., p. 264) had an interview with Colbert on 23rd June 1668

and told him that he regretted that Bernini's plans had been abandoned. Colbert then decided to pursue a new plan, and recounted the difficulties presented by the position of the royal apartments and Bernini's obstinacy about this. 'On ne pouvait nier, dit-il, que le dessein ne fût beau et magnifique, mais qu'en ruinant, pour ainsi dire, tout le Louvre, et en dépensant dix millions, il laissait le Roi avec aussi peu de commodité à son appartement qu'il avait auparavant.' And he spoke twice of the expense of ten millions.

<sup>48</sup> L. Hauteccœur, *Histoire du Louvre*, p. 63.

<sup>49</sup> Chantelou had declared to Colbert that one 'ne devait pas croire' that Le Brun and Perrault had wanted to prevent the execution of Bernini's plan, the first for fear of losing the ministry of buildings of which he was in charge, and the second because of resentment after the sharp quarrel he had had with Bernini. 'Ce serait pour de très petits intérêts empêcher l'exécution d'un trop grand et trop important ouvrage.' He feared that these paltry affairs were the cause of the final refusal.

<sup>50</sup> See the analysis of the doctrine in L. Hauteccœur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France*, Volume II<sup>1</sup>. *The reign of Louis XIV*, pp. 464 et seq.

<sup>51</sup> The statue was ordered on 2nd December 1667 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Italian manuscripts 2083, f<sup>o</sup>. 267). The correspondence on this subject is continued in 1673 (ib. f<sup>o</sup>. 199). Folio 2083 contains numerous letters from Colbert and Bernini, but they are not arranged in alphabetical order. See also Bibliothèque Nationale, *Mélanges Colbert*, 164, f<sup>o</sup>. 462; the letter from Bernini of 13th June 1673 speaks of the statue, is anxious about its situation, and asks God to grant Louis XIV good health and success in his enterprises 'per poter finire quel puoco che manca a questa grand opera'.

<sup>52</sup> V. Martinelli, op. cit. (1953), p. 152.

## CHAPTER VII

<sup>1</sup> J. Meuvret, *Les mouvements des prix de 1661 à 1715 et leurs répercussions* (published by the Société des Statistiques de Paris, 1944), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal*, p. 160, 15th September 1665. Lalanne, the editor of Chantelou, observes (ibid, note 3) that Colbert prophesied rightly, because Louis XIV lived until September 1715.

<sup>3</sup> 'Nous devons faire en sorte d'avoir en France tout ce qu'il y a de beau en Italie.' Colbert, *Lettres* (edited by Clément),

Volume V, p. 290. Letter to Charles Errard, 6th September 1669.

<sup>4</sup> Félibien, *Idee du peintre parfait* (Edition of 1707), pp. 3, 8, 83, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Bellori (Giov. Pietro), *Le Vite de' pittori, scultori* (1672), Dedicatory letter to Colbert and p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Blondel, *Cours d'architecture* (Edition of 1698), the passage on Borromini, Book II, Chapter II, p. 250.

<sup>7</sup> Marcel Reymond, *De Michel-Ange à Tiepolo*, p. 137.

<sup>8</sup> A. Adam, *Histoire de la littérature française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Volume IV, p. 397.

<sup>9</sup> See three recent works on Racine. Raymond Picard in *La carrière de Jean Racine, d'après des documents contemporains* (1955) has traced the stages by which Racine rose from humble origins to his position as a gentleman. He has shown that anxiety for social success accompanied the different phases of his work. Lucien Goldmann, in *Le Dieu caché* (1956), suggests one hypothesis. He explains Racine's work by the effects of certain sociological laws, and by the spiritual crises roused by the religious experiences of Port-Royal. The latter has the virtue of bringing to life the quality of the civilization surrounding Classicism. In *Histoire de la littérature française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (1954), Volume IV, pp. 277-411, A. Adam analyses with rare felicity the poetic character of Iphigène and Phèdre, and in bringing out their humanity and tragic grandeur, makes clear the real meaning of the works: 'Racine has marked a moment in our culture,—and also in Europe's culture . . . the summit of the Renaissance, the fusion of the Greek genius and modern sensibility' (p. 410).

<sup>10</sup> Nantes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Labouchère, 672(15) f<sup>o</sup> 152, the document dissolving the partnership of Lulli and Vigarani, dated the 24th August 1680, describes the separation as between 'Jean-Baptiste Lulli, écuyer, surintendant de la musique de la Chambre du Roy, demeurant à Paris, rue Sainte-Anne, paroisse Saint-Roch et Charles Vigarani, écuyer, seigneur de Saint-Ouen, demeurant à Paris rue des Orties, aux Galeries du Louvre.'

<sup>11</sup> D. Mornet, *Histoire de la littérature classique française*, p. 208.

<sup>12</sup> Molière, *Tartuffe*, III, 3.

<sup>13</sup> For French Classicism the study by P. Lavedan, published in *Histoire de l'art moderne* (Clio), is essential reading.

For ecclesiastical and lay architecture, the following should be consulted: L. Haute-

cœur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique*, Volume II, *Le règne de Louis XIV*. P. Lavedan, *Histoire de l'urbanisme*. Anthony Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France 1500-1700*. R. A. Weigert, *Le style Louis XIV*. B. Dori-val, *La peinture française*, Volume I.

For Versailles: the works of P. de Nolhac, L. Hautecœur, P. Francastel, *La sculpture de Versailles* (Paris, 1936), the study of Fiske Kimbal, *The Genesis of the Château Neuf at Versailles, 1668-1671* (Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1952).

In an interesting article P. Francastel, *Versailles et l'architecture urbaine au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Annales, 10<sup>e</sup> année, oct.-dec. 1955, No 4), suggests that Versailles as planned by Le Vau was essentially a Parisian conception, a copy of the buildings being erected in the city by architects employed by the great financiers of the day. When discussing the cult of monarchy, which played so preponderant a role, he declares 'it was the private residence of the king'. But it is difficult to admit that in 1669 the days of those didactic or amorous fêtes were really past, that the King wished to live 'en homme moderne', and that when he went to Versailles he did not expect adulation. At what particular date, we may ask, did Louis XIV begin this rather modernistic schizophrenia between his divinity as a king and his preoccupations as a purely private person?

<sup>14</sup> Saint-Simon, *Mémoires* (ed. A. de Boislisle), Volume XXVIII, p. 160 et seq. The English translation is from the *Memoirs of M. Le Duc de Saint-Simon*, selected and translated by Lucy Norton (Hamish Hamilton).

<sup>15</sup> A. Tessier, *Le genre decoratif funèbre. Esquisse d'une histoire de ses débuts en France* (Revue de l'art ancien et moderne, Volume XLVI [1924] et XLVII [1925]) is an article which is essential reading on this point.

A brilliant lecture by André Chastel, *Le baroque et la mort*, was read to the Third International Congress for Humanist Studies, held in Venice from the 15th-18th June 1954. *Retorica e Barocco*, p. 33, treats the theme of Baroque reaction to death, and the influences of the Renaissance upon it from a wider angle.

<sup>16</sup> The Protestants, too, had kept up religious ceremony where funerals were concerned.

In the Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pe 51, *Funerailles du Margrave de Bareith (Bayreuth) et Anspach, 14 juin 1603*, one can see the members of the family wearing cowls on top of their tall hats, and the princesses



are clothed in a sort of white scapulatory which was to figure for some time in Lutheran funeral rites.

Amongst the prints in the Bibliothèque Nationale there are some of Court mourning in Sweden during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

<sup>17</sup> The Roman liturgy had been standardized by the Missal authorized by St Pius V in 1568. The Office for the Dead comprises both prayers for the eternal salvation of the deceased and consolation for those surviving. Cf St Augustine, *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, IV, 2, 3: 'Curatio funeris conditio sepulturae, pompae exsequiarum magis sunt vivorum solatio quam subsidia mortuorum.'

<sup>18</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pe 14-15-78, *Pompe funèbre de Piccolomini*, by Bastiano Fulli, 'pittor senese'. Père Ménestrier, in his *Des décorations funèbres*, p. 318, suggests this was for the funeral of the philosopher Francesco Piccolomini, but he did not die until later, in 1604.

<sup>19</sup> For the funeral of Sixtus V, see Bibliothèque Nationale, Pe 14, f° 6. A. Munoz, *Roma Barocca*, pp. 24-25, for a description of the catafalque after Baldo Caetani and reproduction.

<sup>20</sup> Père Ménestrier, *Des décorations funèbres* pp. 1-5.

<sup>21</sup> Père Ménestrier, *Les grâces pleurantes*.

<sup>22</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pe 14,—engravings by S. Leclerc of the funeral ceremonies of the Duke of Beaufort (both in Rome and Paris) and that of the Chancellor Séguier. M. Weigert, in *Jean I Bérain*, p. 27, puts forward the theory that Gisse, who was then preoccupied with preparations for Queen Henrietta Maria's funeral, delegated the design of a cenotaph for Beaufort to Bérain, who thus first came to notice.

<sup>23</sup> In the letters of Madame de Sévigné, one dated 6th May 1672 has a remarkable commentary on the funeral of Séguier. 'The decoration was the most beautiful that one could imagine. . . . Nothing so magnificent and so well conceived has ever been seen; it is Le Brun's masterpiece. . . . The music was fine beyond expression. Baptiste (Lulli) exerted his utmost effort, and was assisted by all the King's musicians. There was an addition made to that fine Miserere and there was a Libera which filled the eyes of the whole assembly with tears; I can scarce conceive that there can be heard in Heaven a nobler harmony.'

<sup>24</sup> For Turenne's funeral ceremony, see Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pe 14,

and the little book by Ménestrier, *Les Vertus chrestiennes et les Vertus militaires en deuil, dessein de l'appareil funèbre dressé par ordre du Roy dans l'église ND de Paris le 9 septembre 1675*, 'à Paris chez Estienne Michalet, Rue Saint-Jacques à l'image de Saint-Paul, 1675'.

<sup>25</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pe 14, f° 74, *Pompe funèbre de la reine Marie-Therese*.

<sup>26</sup> Ménestrier, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> If their views were ignored as far as the ceremony at Notre Dame was concerned, Saintot, who was the Master of Ceremonies at Saint-Denis, where the burial took place, welcomed them. The theme chosen was the reception of the corpse by the church, and the welcome given to the soul by the saints of the royal house of France.

The manuscript of what Ménestrier intended to publish about the burial of the Queen at Saint-Denis is also to be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ve Colbert 142, f° 80.

<sup>28</sup> Ménestrier, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>29</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pe 14; a very beautiful engraving by Dolivar of the funeral of the Prince of Condé in Notre Dame on 10th March 1687. It has been often reproduced.

<sup>30</sup> The collection of prints in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Pe 14 and 15, has some beautiful prints of funerals in France and other countries dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There is that of Queen Christina in Rome (Pe 14 and 15), and that of the Spanish Queen at Notre Dame in the same year, etc. The cenotaph erected for the Dauphin (the Duke of Burgundy) at the Dauphine (Gisse; Pe 14, f° 62) ushers in a transitional age where elements of Rococo begin to appear. In contrast to this there is the cenotaph erected for the funeral of Philip V of Spain in 1746, the work of Slodtz (Pe 14, f° 29, has an engraving of it by C. N. Cochin fils), which seems to revert to traditional Baroque. Looking through Portfolio 15 one can see, about 1760, a neo-classicism taking shape. Symbolic figures disappear and are replaced by motifs which have no religious significance, such as the pikes which decorate the cenotaph of Louis XV at Saint-Denis (1774).

<sup>31</sup> The basic work is that by J. Braun, *Das Christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Munich, 1924), where there is a good study of the opposing styles of the reredoses of the high altar and the smaller reredoses in the form of a small chapel,

p. 400. In France a remarkable type of a triumphal reredos is that of the high altar in the cathedral of St Etienne at Toulouse. But one must bear in mind that it may have been divided into three parts to fit in with the curve of the polygonal choir where it is placed.

<sup>32</sup> Examples at Commana (Finistère), and at Bouin (Vendée).

<sup>33</sup> J. B. Thiers (curate of Champrond), *Dissertations ecclésiastiques sur les principaux autels, les jubés* (Paris, 1688).

<sup>34</sup> L. Hauteccœur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France*, Volume II, *Le règne de Louis XIV*, p. 807.

<sup>35</sup> It would be necessary in the case of every reredos to search out the contract. Many of these have been published by C. Port as notes to his *Artistes angevins*. The design submitted by the artist and accepted by his client was described in the contracts with meticulous detail. The choice of figures, whether for an altarpiece or a reredos, naturally lay with the client.

<sup>36</sup> C. Port in *Artistes angevins* (1881), in his foreword, p. 11, recalls the mutilation of churches which had taken place even at the time he was compiling his collection. Since then (more than seventy-five years) this vandalism, either through ignorance or stupidity, has made further inroads. Images of St Anthony of Padua or St Teresa of Lisieux have usurped the place of earlier saints, and whole reredoses have been destroyed in the mania for restoration, or so-called restoration.

<sup>37</sup> See the study by R. P. Fidèle Durieux, a Franciscan, *Trois rétables franciscains du Périgord*, with introduction and photographs by M. Jean Saret (Périgueux, 1953).

<sup>38</sup> G. Schreiber, *Deutschland und Spanien* (Düsseldorf, 1936), pp. 178 et seq.

<sup>39</sup> Two examples noted in this province: in the church of St Nicolas at Chateaubriant (Loire-Atlantique), which was reconstructed in the nineteenth century, there is a seventeenth-century picture of St Isidore in one of the aisles. In the church at Clion (Loire-Atlantique), there is a modern statue of St Isidore in this ancient church, which might well have had a reredos of the seventeenth century, which was embellished with a statue of him that has now disappeared.

<sup>40</sup> G. Schreiber, op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> C. Port, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>42</sup> There are many examples of this. Very often God the Father and the Holy Ghost

are placed above a figure of the Virgin and Child. C. Port, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>43</sup> The statue of a saint not easily identified which may have come from a reredos in the monastery. The resemblance to Anne of Austria in Guillaumin's statue is most striking (St John de Béré at Chateaubriant, Loire-Atlantique). The iconography of Sargé has been noticed by L. Hauteccœur, op. cit., p. 808. There is room for a study of how in the seventeenth century and even later St Louis was often represented by portraits of Louis XIII. At La Chaize-Giraud (Vendée), a clumsy nineteenth-century copy of a seventeenth-century picture shows St Louis venerating the True Cross; he is clad in royal robes and has the features of Louis XIII (painter unknown). At Rio de Janeiro in the church of São Francisco de la Penitencia, we find St Louis honoured because of his connection with the Third Order of the Franciscans, again represented by the conventional figure of Louis XIII with long hair, moustached and royal. But Louis XIII himself finds a place in Marian iconography. Cf the interesting and very credible suggestion made by M. J. Vanuxem about the fresco in the church at Zwiefalten in Swabia, which he thinks shows Louis XIII taking the oath (Congrès archéologique de France, CV<sup>e</sup> Session), p. 223.

<sup>44</sup> St Matthew, III, 17; St Mark, I, 11; St Luke, III, 22.

<sup>45</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Hd 1. *Miscellaneous collection of ecclesiastical buildings and altars . . . etc.*, by J. Lepautre, contains the prints from the collections published by Poilly, Jollain, Mariette.

Hd 5, J. Barbet, *Le livre d'architecture d'autels et cheminées*, dedicated to Mgr l'Eminentissime Cardinal Duc de Richelieu, invented and drawn by J. Barbet, engraved 'à l'eau forte' by A. Bosse (Paris, 1633).

Hd 30a, the work of Abraham Bosse, in four volumes, classified according to the catalogue of G. Duplessis.

<sup>46</sup> The work of Abraham Bosse, Volume II, p. 343. The reredos of the Assumption. The posture of the angel is seen in a reredos of the Descent from the Cross by J. Lepautre (Mariette collection, f° 5).

<sup>47</sup> Without going into the subject exhaustively, the question is whether these reredoses, like those at Gildas-des-Bois (Loire-Atlantique) and at Lanouée (Morbihan), date from the eighteenth century. Cf M. Giraud-Mangin, *Les objets classés en Loire-Inférieure* (Bulletin de la société archéo-



logique de la Loire-Inferieure, 1938), and G. Duhem, *Les églises de France; Morbihan*, p. 83.

J. M. Richard, *Notes sur quelques artistes lavallois du dix-septième siècle, les constructeurs de rétables*, says that it was at the beginning of the eighteenth century that the demand for reredoses became limited, at least in the region he studied. One might ask if this was connected with the economic situation. A change of taste seems more likely, for prices in the West remained fairly steady. Pierre Biardeau asked the Franciscans 6,800 livres for his reredos (C. Port, op. cit.) in 1665. Jean Boffrant in 1674 asked 4,000 livres for the reredos at Vannes. This data was supplied respectively by Lallemand, *Les origines historiques de la ville de Vannes*, Bauchel, *Nouveau dictionnaire des architectes*, and Granges de Surgères, *Les artistes Nantais*, p. 55.

The sketch Biardeau made for the Franciscans is of great Baroque exuberance. Classicism could offer a more economic solution, and one should also bear that in mind.

<sup>48</sup> On the Churriguera, apart from the work by Marques de Lozoya, *Historia del Arte hispanico*, Volume IV, see A. Garcia Bellido, *Estudios del barroco español. Avances para una monografía de los Churriguera* (Archivum Español de Arte y Arqueología), 1929, pp. 21-86, and 1930, pp. 135-187. José M. Plá Dalmau, *Le arquitectura barroca española y el Churriguera* (Madrid, 1951), summary. Antonio Sancho Corbacho, *Arquitectura barroca sevillana* (Madrid, 1952), gives, Planché 222, a remarkable reproduction of the reredos at Umbrete, and, p. 1, analyses it from this monument.

<sup>49</sup> W. Weisbach, *Die Kunst der Barock in Italien, Frankreich, Deutschland und Spanien* (Propylaen Kunstgeschichte, 1924), Volume XI, p. 56. J. Rousset, *Circé et le Paon*.

One may equally quote Gonzague de Reynold, *Le XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, le classique et le baroque* (1944), p. 141, where he says: 'The monarchy of Louis XIV was as much Baroque as classical. The place where they meet, and Baroque joins with Classicism, is at Versailles.' We agree, but nevertheless it is Classicism that finally wins in the later stages of Versailles.

## CHAPTER VIII

<sup>1</sup> M. Whinney and O. Millar, *English Art 1625-1715*, Volume VII of *The Oxford History of English Art* (London, 1957).

J. Summerson, *Architecture in Britain 1530-1830* (London, 1953).

F. Saxl and R. Wittkower, *British Art and the Mediterranean* (1948). This is a most important book in which the affinity of English and continental work is clearly shown in the superb illustrations.

Dutton, *The Age of Wren* (London, 1951).

<sup>2</sup> On Inigo Jones, the excellent chapter by Margaret Whinney, the articles of the Italian Encyclopaedia and the work by J. A. Gotch, *Inigo Jones* (1928).

<sup>3</sup> Almost unique. In fact the interior of the Queen's House, which was arranged in accordance with Henrietta Maria's wishes, shows a predominately French taste. But it should be added that Inigo Jones not only knew Italy, but also France. His stay there had largely been spent in studying domestic architecture and the layout of rooms in private houses.

<sup>4</sup> The relevant dates are: The Queen's House, 1616-35; Whitehall Palace, 1619-22; The Queen's Chapel, 1627. This chapel was to be given over to the Roman Catholic rite for the Infanta whom Charles, as Prince of Wales, was expected to marry, but later—his fate was to marry a 'Roman'—it was finished and put in order for Henrietta Maria, and later still was used by another Catholic queen, Catherine of Braganza.

<sup>5</sup> Colin Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, Preface. Cf infra p. 187.

<sup>6</sup> Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622).

<sup>7</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Italian manuscripts, No. 2082, f° 37. Letter of Queen Henrietta to the Cavaliere Bernini, in French, dated from Whitehall, 26th June 1639.

<sup>8</sup> Whinney, op. cit., p. 269.

<sup>9</sup> The rebuilding of the Palace at Whitehall left a free hand to the architect, because everything (except for the miraculous escape of the Banqueting Hall) had been burnt to the ground in the fire of 1698. The problem was a constant challenge to English architects, Inigo Jones, Webb (who drew up several plans), and later on Wren himself. They had to build an immense palace stretching from the Thames to St James's Park, to give articulation to the building and relate the wings that spread out to the end pavilions to a central motif. The designs show how the Renaissance formula, where each element was self-contained, was superseded by the Baroque conception of fusing the parts into one whole.

<sup>10</sup> In the plan of Inigo Jones, the towers encircling the Gate of Honour are curiously evocative of the towers of the Tudor style.

<sup>11</sup> Saxl and Wittkower, *British Art and the Mediterranean*, p. 52. But M. Whinney, op. cit. p. 77, stresses the almost servile likeness to the work of Vandyck. This is of little importance in itself, but is of interest to us in showing that the revolutionaries accepted the taste of the late Court circles.

<sup>12</sup> John Amos Komenský (or Comenius) was a Czech reformer who belonged to the Moravian Brethren of which he became a bishop. For the sake of his church rather than for any consideration of personal safety he sought foreign patronage in the Protestant circles in Hungary, Germany, the Netherlands and England. He was a prolific writer on philosophy, though much of his work is concerned with methods of education.

<sup>13</sup> On Wren: G. F. Webb, *Sir Christopher Wren* (1937), and the works (already cited) of Summerson, Dutton and Whinney.

<sup>14</sup> For St Paul's, in addition to works already quoted, *The Pictorial History of St Paul's Cathedral*, by the Rev W. M. Atkins. This work is the official record. It should be remembered how many difficulties were put in Wren's way during the construction of St Paul's, his disinterested and unsparing devotion to his work, the brutal decision of Parliament in 1697 to reduce his already meagre salary to £200 per annum in order to make him work more quickly, his disgrace in 1718, even though the cathedral had already been completed six years previously, and his love for his greatest masterpiece. Wren died in 1723, over ninety years old.

<sup>15</sup> In addition to the plates of Palladio, Scamozzi, Vignola and Serlio, Wren would have been able to draw upon *Il nuovo teatro della fabriche di Roma* (published by C. B. Falda in Rome in 1665); *L'architecture française* by J. Marot (1670), and the *Recueil des plans, profils et élévations* (1660-70); and, later on, the work by Carlo Fontana, *Il tempo vaticano e sue origine* (1694).

<sup>16</sup> A. Pichot, DM, *Voyage historique et littéraire en Angleterre et en Ecosse* (Ladvoat, Paris, 1825), Volume I, p. 88.

<sup>17</sup> Such as Fischer von Erlach, whose stay in London would merit a special study.

<sup>18</sup> This was not the smoke of factories but the smoke from domestic hearths which, given London's climate, turned mist into dense fog.

<sup>19</sup> Vide the transept at the Redentore, built by Palladio, and, also in Venice, the elongated choir beyond the ambulatory of the octagon.

<sup>20</sup> *Vitruvius Britannicus*, Volume I, Preface.

<sup>21</sup> Some most interesting remarks about this are made by Elisabeth and Weyland Young in the introduction (p. 50) to their book *Old London Churches*.

## CHAPTER IX

<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand Peroutka, *Jaci Jsme* (Which we are) (Prague, 1924), p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Prince Eugen, apart from his military feats, did play a part in politics important enough to warrant coupling his name with these great statesmen. Apart from the old but still essential biography by Alfred von Arneth, *Prinz Eugen von Savoyen* (1858-64), 3 volumes, there are the works of Max Braubach, *Prinz Eugen von Savoyen* (Historische Zeitschrift, 154, I, 1936) and the interesting sketches of the great German collections: O. Redlich, *Prinz Eugen in Menschen, die Geschichte machten*, II (1931); W. Schussler, *Prinz Eugen von Savoyen in Meister der Politik*, Volume II (Stuttgart, 1922); R. Lorenz, *Prinz Eugen von Savoyen in Die Grosse Deutschen, Neue Deutsche Biographie*, Volume II (1935); and Niedermeier, *Prinz Eugen in seinem Verhältnis zur Kultur seiner Zeit in Historisches Jahrbuch*, LIV, 4 (1934).

<sup>3</sup> Many studies have recently been published about the evolution of the great estate in Bohemia by M. Alois Mika (Cf infra, note 14).

The work of Otto Placht, *Lidnatost a společenská skladba českého státu v 16-18 stoléti* (Prague, 1957) (the population and the composition of society in the Czech state from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century), renews the views on the bourgeoisie in the seignorial towns.

<sup>4</sup> O. Redlich, *Über Kunst und Kultur des Barocks in Österreich* (AOG 115 Bd 1943), pp. 331-79. W. Pinder, *Deutscher Barock-Königstein im Tannus* (1953). On Austrian civilization, see A. Tíbal, *L'Autrichien* (Paris, Berger-Levrault, 1936), and more particularly on Baroque architecture in Austria, Ann Tizia Leitich, *Vienna Gloriosa, Weltstadt des Barocks* (Vienna, 1944), and Bruno Grimschitz, *Wiener Barock Palaste* (Wiener Verlag, 1947) (Institut für Denkmalpflege).

<sup>5</sup> Félibien, *Idée du peintre parfait* (1707 ed.), p. 83.

<sup>6</sup> Z. Kalista, *Mládi Humprechta Jana Černi-*



*na-Chudenic, Zrození barokního kavalíra* (The Youth of Humbert-Jean Cernin-Chudenic, the Formation of a Baroque Knight) (Prague, 1932), pp. 168 et seq.

<sup>7</sup> There is a legend that this picture (now in the Prague museum) was carried to the city to avoid the jolting of sending it by coach.

<sup>8</sup> This material was accidentally burnt and in its place the present canopy was erected, which hardly conceals the fact that the church here was never completed.

<sup>9</sup> Z. Kalista, op. cit., Volume II, p. 86, quotes a contemporary, Th. Ameyden, *Diario della Città e Corte di Roma* (1646), who speaks of a 'bella machina per esporre il Santmo all'oratione delle 40 hore, la cui esplicatione questi Padri fecero mettere in stampa'.

<sup>10</sup> Emmanuel Poche, an excellent Czech art historian, rejects the idea that Baroque in Bohemia was so bound up with the Counter-Reformation that it only started then. He finds that at the beginning of the eighteenth century there is, both in ecclesiastical and lay buildings, a feeling for Baroque and claims that both the Emperor Mathias's porch (*Československá Vlastivěda, Umění*, p. 122) and that of the church of Panna Maria Vitezna (*Pražské portály*, The porches in Prague [1947], p. 27) should be reckoned as Baroque. These one might equally well consider as belated Renaissance.

<sup>11</sup> There is a very considerable number of historical studies of Wallenstein and it is not necessary to give here a bibliography, though it should be said that Josef Pekař contributed an outstanding essay, *Valdštejn (1630-1634). Dějiny valdštejnského spiknutí* (Wallenstein from 1630 to 1634. History of the Conspiracy) (Prague, 1934), German translation 1936.

<sup>12</sup> Karl M. Swoboda, *Prag* (Deutscher Kunstverlag, Berlin, n.d.), p. 86, draws our attention to the stay Andrea Spezza made in the Duchy of Oldenbourg before coming to Prague. This work was published during the German occupation of Czechoslovakia from 1939 to 1945, and though interesting and illuminating, continually shows traces of overstressing German influences. For the Wallenstein palace, see *Doba Bělohorská a Albrecht Valdštejn* (The Time of the White Mountain and Wallenstein) (Prague, 1934), in the collection of lectures published on the occasion of the tercentenary of the conspiracy, and the study by Zdeněk Wirth, *Valdštejn a současné umění* (Wallenstein and

the Art of His Time), pp. 173-192, with bibliography.

There is a good analysis of Wallenstein's palace and an illustration in Alois Kubiček, *Les Palais de Prague* (French edition, Prague, V. Polacek, 1947).

<sup>13</sup> Zdeněk Wirth (op. cit., p. 182) proves a resemblance between the arches of this loggia and the Palazzo del Tè et Mantua, and between the interior decorations and that of the Villa Madama in Rome.

For Czech art of the seventeenth century as a whole, the eighth volume *Umění* (Art) in *Československá Vlastivěda* (the Czechoslovakian encyclopaedia), written by the art historians Matějček and Poche, with (p. 206) a bibliography on Baroque is indispensable. There is also Zdeněk Wirth, *L'art tchécoslovaque de l'antiquité à nos jours* (French edition, Prague, Vesmír, 1939), and Jakub Pavel, *Dějiny našeho umění* (The History of our Art) (Prague, Unie, 1947).

<sup>14</sup> For an overall history of Austria the book by K. and M. Uhlirz, *Handbuch der Geschichte Österreichs und seiner Nachbarländer Böhmen und Ungarn* (Vienna, 1949 edition), presents a short exposé and an invaluable bibliography.

The difficulty of writing a history of Austria is that, if the picture is to be complete, works in little-known languages, such as Hungarian, Czech and Serbo-Croat, must be consulted. The most important general histories of this period are: O. Redlich, *Österreichs Grossmachtbildung in der Zeit Leopolds I* (Volume I of *Geschichte Österreichs* by Huber-Redlich, Gotha, 1921), and Hugo Hantsch, *Die Geschichte Österreichs*, 2 volumes (Vienna, 1947-50). Czech historians have contributed much to the study of the great estates and rural society, without which one cannot understand the development of Baroque culture.

J. Pekař, *Kniha o Kosti*.

Kamil Krofta, *Dějiny selského stavu* (History of the Peasant Condition) (Prague, 1919, 2nd edition, 1949).

These are works of the Liberal historical school. After the second war, the Marxist school has shown interest in these problems. It is enough to draw attention to the importance of the articles which Alois Mika has contributed to the review *Československý časopis Historický*, on the economic aspects of the great estates and the exploitation of the great fenslands in northern Bohemia (1954) and the debates between him and another Marxist historian, M. Válka (1958).

<sup>15</sup> Otto Placht, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> The first interpretation mentioned links up with the work of the great historian and politician Palacký, 1798–1876, whose *History of the Czech People in Bohemia and Moravia* did not extend to the seventeenth century. It was published both in German and Czech in 1848. The thread that holds the story together is the opposition of the peace-loving Slav to the bellicose German. The teaching of the Hussites is recognized as the purest expression of the native spiritual genius. The general line adopted can only lead to a suspicion of Baroque civilization which was born after the defeat of 1620.

This thesis is also repeated by the French historian Ernest Denis, 1849–1921, in *La Bohême depuis la Montagne Blanche*, Volume I (2nd ed., 1930). Baroque art is most severely condemned on ideological grounds, pp. 246 et seq. and particularly on p. 279. The interpretation of history which Professor Masaryk, later to become the founder and president of Czechoslovakia, held regarding the Czechs and the Slovaks was always dominated by a Hussite idealism. It was this that led to the scientific quarrels, always conducted with the greatest courtesy, between him and Josef Pekař (1870–1937). Pekař wrote *Kniha o Kosti* (The book of Kost) (1911, 2nd edition 1935), and some suggestive articles about the White Mountain and St John Nepomuk. His view was that Baroque civilization had helped the peasant population to regain their traditional beliefs. Interest in Baroque was also shown by writers and artists during the last years of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth centuries (Julius Zeyer, Miloš Marten, the groups of reviews *Moderní Revue* and *Akkord*, Arne Novak, Mlle Zdenka Braunerová), and then by the art historians Matějček and Birnbaum. One can understand that afterwards it was impossible to turn a blind eye to the advent of Baroque in Bohemia, and a third interpretation of the phenomenon has been put forward by the gifted writer Jaromír Neumann in his recent book about seventeenth-century painting in Bohemia, *Malířství XVII<sup>e</sup> století v Čechách* (Seventeenth-century painting in Bohemia) (Orbis, 1953).

<sup>17</sup> Between 1918 and 1936 there have been many publications in Czechoslovakia about Baroque art and literature. One of the most original is Josef Vašica's *České literární baroko: příspěvky k jeho studiu* (Czech Baroque Literature: Contributions to its Study)

(Prague, 1938). It is not so much a synthesis as a series of studies of detailed but revealing points. One already knew about the Jesuit Bohuslav Balbin, 1621–88, who had published an apologia for Czech language in Latin, for Ernest Denis had written about him at length in *La Bohême après la Montagne Blanche*, Volume I, p. 371. But one was utterly ignorant of the Jesuit Bedřich (Frederick) Bridel, 1619–80, until Vašica revealed this extraordinary man—a mixture of missionary, translator and inspired poet of German Baroque.

After the war, Albert Pražák published a compendium of how the Czech language had survived throughout the vicissitudes of history, *Národ se branil* (The Nation Defended Itself) (Prague, Sfinx ed., 1945), in which there is one long and learned chapter, *Od Bílé Hory po Balbina* (From the White Mountain to Balbin), in which, pp. 48–85, the Baroque period is considered and Balbin's *Apologia* are analysed. J. Pekař, in his *Bílá Hora*, 1921, has written a sketch of life in Bohemia in the seventeenth century, which embodies the results of his researches and studies at the University of Prague.

<sup>18</sup> J. Pekař, *Bílá Hora*, p. 108.

The allusion to the famous novel by B. Němcová, *Babička* (The Grandmother), which was published in 1855. For over a century, and even now, this retains its popularity as well as being favoured by the authorities. But better than giving a page reference, let us translate this passage by Pekař. 'Baroque brought with it a strong element of civilization. This did not only consist of the artistic riches with which it filled the country and revealed a new feeling for beauty, for Baroque dominated architecture, painting, music and peasant arts and crafts. It is found again in the feelings and deep religious emotion which the Marian cult transformed into a fervency equal to that at the dawn of the Hussite movement. Baroque, by its buildings and by the innumerable statues—especially those of the popular new saint, St John Nepomuk—has left an indelible impression on the Czech landscape. It has left its mark on every aspect of popular life; its customs, its costumes, its songs and even its philosophy of life. Indeed it eventually formed this rural world, with its own particular soul, the world of *Babička*, where we recognize something that is authentically Czech, from which later generations of our nation are descended.'



<sup>19</sup> Bruno Grimschitz, *Wiener Barock Paläste* (Vienna Verlag, 1947) (Institut für Denkmalpflege) and the guide to the Dchio collection, which is full of information: *Wien*, by Justus Schmidt and Hans Tietze (4th edition, 1954). *Geschichte der Stadt Wien*, 8 volumes (Vienna, 1897-1918).

<sup>20</sup> On Prince Karl-Eusebius de Liechtenstein and his treatise on architecture, *Das Werk des Architekturs*, cf Bruno Grimschitz, op. cit., who has a very interesting preface, from which are borrowed the details given above.

Viktor Fleischer, *Fürst Karl-Eusebius von Liechtenstein als Bauherr und Kunstsammler 1611-84* (1910).

On the period of Leopold I, besides the information given by the excellent picture of O. Redlich, *Oesterreichs Grossmachtbildung in der Zeit Leopolds I*, Gotha, 1921, see: A. Wandruszka, *Das Haus Habsburg* (Vienna, 1956).

On music: *Encyclopédie de la musique*, by A. Lavignac, I<sup>e</sup> partie, *Histoire de la musique, Italie, Allemagne* (Paris, 1913).

<sup>21</sup> H. Hassinger, *Johann Joachim Becher, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Merkantilismus* (Vienna, 1951), and the works of Becher himself (*Politischen Discurs*). Might I be permitted to refer readers wanting further details to the course of lectures I held at the Sorbonne in 1957-58, which the Centre de Documentation Universitaire (5 Place de la Sorbonne) issued in two pamphlets in 1958.

<sup>22</sup> Abraham a Sancta Clara; *Sammtliche Werke*, Passau, Volume I, *Prophetische Willkommen* (1676).

<sup>23</sup> Casimir Freschot, *Remarques historiques et critiques d'un voyage d'Italie en Hollande dans l'année 1704*, p. 136.

## CHAPTER X

<sup>1</sup> Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes, Pd<sup>1</sup>. Print representing the triumph of the Emperor Leopold.

<sup>2</sup> A good example of this state of mind is found in the correspondence between Prince Ferdinand Schwarzenberg, 1652-1703, and his bailiffs. Amongst the aristocratic society of his time he stands out as one of the best administrators, wishing to put in order his possessions in the Empire, at Vienna, in Styria and in Bohemia, so that he might leave a fortune to his ten children (Antonin Markus, *Schwarzenberská ročenka* [1935]. Otto Placht, op. cit., p. 234. In nineteen years he had increased the value of the family estates from 976,213 thalers to 2,194,196.)

Two letters from him, published in the thirteenth volume of the Bohemian archives (Archiv Český) offer an excellent illustration of the 'paternal' outlook. They are written in German, interspersed with Latin expressions.

To Siebert.

Dear Captain, from your letter of 20th October last year, it has been drawn to my attention that you consider you might authorize the son of the brewer, subject of this place, to continue with his studies, since his presence is not actually necessary in my chancery. But it must already have been brought to your notice how very few of these young men succeed since the majority do no good and end up by taking Holy Orders *ex taedio laborum*. If one could find the young boy some clerical work it would be best, for if he has nothing to do, it is likely to spoil him, rather than improve him. Generally, it is best that the children of artisans of this class, once they have learnt to read and write, should be employed from their youth *ad professionem parentum*, at least where they can be useful, and give up their studies.

This you may take *pro maxima generali*, and not only in Wittingau, but everywhere else as well.

Vienna, 17th January 1693.

Ferdinand,

Prince of Schwarzenberg m.p.

To Hoflinger.

Dear Captain, I have decided to agree to the authorization (dismissorials) which has been asked for by a Johannes Korbel, a young dependant of the village of Suchental, who has finished his studies in the humanities at Neuhaus and wishes to take a course in philosophy, because he desires to embrace a religious life (from what he told me he should be accepted as a novice in the monastery of Zwetel) or at least receive *die majores ordines pro sacerdotio*.

But you should also recall, what has been pointed out more than once, that one should not let the children of dependants devote themselves to studies, but (what is much better for them and for the estate) to agriculture or at least some craft. I herewith repeat this ordinance yet again. You must keep a firm hand on such applications in your province, when you hold the orphans' assemblies

(a), or the courts of Justice or other meetings, so that if one or other of the young dependants has gone off to study —no matter where—the parents or relations of the student can take care that the student returns at once and is kept on the estate.

Vienna, 17th December 1698.  
Ferdinand,  
Prince of Schwarzenberg, m.p.

(a) The orphans' assemblies was the name given to the inspection of the young peasant children, which was carried out by the bailiff of the estate. The term originally referred to the orphans which the lord of the manor had adopted, but gradually it was extended to all the youth, so that the bailiff could check on their ages, state of health, and skill in any particular work.

<sup>3</sup> In Vienna Prince Eugene commissioned Fischer von Erlach to build the palace in the Himmelpfortgasse, where the interior decorations were as magnificent as the architecture; outside the city he asked Hildebrandt for plans for the Belvedere; he later added the Little Belvedere, which today houses the Baroque Museum.

<sup>4</sup> A. Tíbal, *l'Autrichien*.

In his book *Barock in Ungarn*, which enables us to follow the Baroque movement in Hungary, Andreas Angyal makes this very fair and just comment: 'One may often hurl reproaches at the Hungarian aristocracy, but one thing is certain, that it created round it an atmosphere of the highest way of living, an atmosphere in which noble and fine minds will always feel at home.'

<sup>5</sup> A recent article by Tat'ana Kubatova in the Czech periodical *Umění* (IV<sup>2</sup>, 1956) questions the attribution of the palace at Slavkov to Martinelli. He may have furnished the original plans, but his more classical outlook (cf his masterpiece, the Liechtenstein Palace in Vienna) is not found at Slavkov. The author of this article justly observes: 'The important Baroque buildings were very seldom completed according to the original plans and in the course of construction sometimes the Baroque characteristics and sometimes the classical ones were arraigned or preferred, which is an argument against there being a profound or irreconcilable opposition between the two styles.'

<sup>6</sup> On the University Church, see the monograph by Bruno Grimschitz, *Universitätskirche* (1938, corrected edition 1956), and the article by Patzak, *Andrea del Pozzo*,

*Umbau der Wiener Universitätskirche* (Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst, XXIX, 1916), p. 22.

<sup>7</sup> On Fischer von Erlach, the great work by H. Sedlmayr.

On Prandtauer, whose portrait is kept in the Abbey of Melk, H. Hantsch, *Jakob Prandtauer* (Vienna, 1926).

<sup>8</sup> H. Sedlmayr, *Fischer von Erlach*, pp. 36 and 40.

<sup>9</sup> Greger, *Karlskirche* (1934). Hans Sedlmayr, *Allegorie und Architektur*, p. 197, in *Retorica e Barocco* (Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Umanistici Venezia 15-18 Giugno 1954) (1955), analyses the allegorical aspects of the columns: constancy and power, in short the virtues of St Charles and of the Emperor, but the columns of Hercules also recall the claim against Spain. The façade of the chapels of the Karlskirche remind one of the porticoes of the Salute.

<sup>10</sup> Monograph on Melk by Dr P. Reginald, OSB (1957).

<sup>11</sup> One should remember in this connection the importance of the organs in Austrian Baroque churches, where as much care was taken to procure a fine instrument as to decorate the organ case and loft. Hans Sedlmayr (op. cit., p. 62) also insists upon the connection between Fischer von Erlach's Baroque and music.

<sup>12</sup> There is a very suggestive study by Hermann Weidhaas, *West-Östliche Beziehungen in der Baugeschichte des 17 und 18 Jahrhunderts*, in (Weissenschaftliche Zeitschrift des Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar III. Jahrgang, 1955-56, No 2), pp. 75-147.

<sup>13</sup> Poche, *Československá Vlastivěda*, op. cit., p. 130.

<sup>14</sup> Melk is 65 metres long, and the height of the cupola is 64 metres. St Nicolas in Malá Strana at Prague is 62 metres long, 26 metres wide and the height of the cupola is 79 metres.

<sup>15</sup> A special study should be written about St Nicolas in Malá Strana, which is now being restored with great faith by the Administration of The Fine Arts of the Czechoslovak Republic. The beautiful fresco by Kracker of the *Glory of St Nicolas* is once more visible. Furthermore the decorations of the side-chapels, with St Michael and St Carlo Borromeo, Jesuit saints who might intercede against illness and the plague, is a typical example of eighteenth century hagiology.

<sup>16</sup> The work by Angyal, *Barock in Ungarn*,



enables us to follow the spread of this civilization, first in the royalistic and Catholic Hungary of the seventeenth century, and then, after the reconquest and pacification (1686-1711), throughout the whole country, where the cult of the *Regnum Marianum* tended to unify Hungary as a land under the special protection of the Virgin, which had also been the case in Poland and France.

The same Italian and German artists were employed in the Kingdom of Hungary as in the Hereditary Lands, but they were simultaneously interpreters of local as well as general devotional needs. Angyal calls St John Nepomuk (p. 71) 'the most beloved saint of Hapsburg Baroque'. This is doubtless so, in the sense we have pointed out, but the cult of St John Nepomuk is in a way a projection of Czech Baroque upon the Baroque in the Hapsburg lands.

<sup>17</sup> Hans Werner Hegemann, *Deutsches Rokoko* (1956 edition), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> O. J. Blaežiček, *Pražská Plastika raného rokoka* (The plastic quality of the Rococo at Prague), p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> The expression 'anachronique civilisation foncière' is by E. Labrousse, *Le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (PUF, 1953), p. 521.

On the politics of Joseph II, there are the general and already old works of P. von Mitrofanov, *Joseph II Politische und Kulturelle Tätigkeit*, translated from the Russian by von Demelic (Vienna, 1910), 2 volumes; P. K. Padower, *The Revolutionary Emperor Joseph II, 1741-90* (London, 1934); J. V. Prašek, *Panování císaře Josefa II* (The reign of Joseph II) (Prague, 1903), which is an even older work, but very well-informed.

There are also François Fejtö, *Un Habsbourg révolutionnaire, Joseph II* (Plon, 1953), with an interesting bibliography, and Anton Mell, *Die Anfänge der Bauernbefreiung in Steiermark unter Maria Theresia und Joseph II* (Graz-Styria).

Two works about Josephism are by E. Winter: *Tausend Jahre Geisteskampf im Sudetenraum* (Leipzig, 1938), and *Der Josefismus und seine Geschichte, Beiträge zur Geistesgeschichte Österreichs, 1740-1848* (Brunn, 1943).

There is also an article by Roger Bauer, *Le Joséphisme* (Critique, July, 1958), who states the position of the studies on this question.

## CHAPTER XI

<sup>1</sup> Peter Skarga, who was born at Grojec in 1536 and died in Cracow in 1612, after fulfilling the duties of a curate, and then of

a canon at Lwow, went to stay in Rome, where he entered the Company of Jesus. He was the first rector of the Academy at Wilno, which had been founded by King Sigismund Bathory; he then settled down in Cracow where he was renowned as professor, preacher and proselytizer. In his sermons he frequently alluded to the political dangers which he thought were threatening Poland. 'As our bodies die from internal maladies or external accidents, so may kingdoms carry within themselves illnesses that may lead to their death. None of you, puissant lords, are so simple as not to recognize the grave and dangerous maladies of our kingdom and not to perceive at the same time the enemy outside who begrudges our existence and threatens us with a terrible attack.'

On the other hand, during the Time of the Troubles, Poland, who had already encouraged the pretender Dimitri (1606), invaded Russia as far as the environs of Moscow (1608), and captured Smolensk, which she held till 1667.

<sup>2</sup> M. Jobert, the French historian and expert on Polish history, is preparing a book on Poland during the crisis of Christianity (the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). The general lines of this work were given in the *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Moderne* (12th Series, No 3, *Supplement to the Revue d'Histoire moderne et contemporaine*, No 4, May-June 1957).

<sup>3</sup> For all these questions, see J. Rutkowski, *Histoire économique de la Pologne avant les partages* (Paris, 1927) (Collection de l'Institut d'Etudes Slaves de l'Université de Paris), and more especially, for the links with the Mediterranean, see F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée*, p. 499.

<sup>4</sup> Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *Dwa baroki, Krakowski i Wileński* (Nakładem Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności, 1956), contrasts the older Baroque in Cracow at the end of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, with that in Wilno, which dates from the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. He stresses the part played by Italian decorators such as Balthasar Fontana, who also worked in Austria.

<sup>5</sup> There is no balanced study of these negotiations between the Poles and the Russians, which constituted the most important aspect of the fight carried on between the Latins and the Orthodox in the middle of the Slav world. The two countries were rivals politically, both with important territorial claims

against each other, but it is impossible that these two civilizations could exist side by side without exerting a reciprocal influence. Moreover, Ordine-Naščokine, who held high office under Czar Alexis Mikhailovitch, represents at about 1660, a generation that was transitional, and, after the bitter wars between the two countries, he sufficiently appreciated the superiority of Polish civilization to wish—not to adopt it or submit to it—to adopt its best characteristics. These questions were studied in my course of lectures at the Sorbonne in 1957, under the title *Russia from 1659 to 1689* (in two parts, Centre de Documentation, 5 Place de la Sorbonne, Paris).

In Russian: Prof. B. Klioutchevsky, *Kurs russkoï istorii* (Course in Russian history) (1923 edition), Volume III, pp. 423 et seq; *Otcherki istorii CCCP Period feodalizma XVII<sup>e</sup> vëka* (Outline of Russian history, the feudal period: the seventeenth century) under the direction of A. A. Novosels'ky, p. 497 (the chapter on international relations is by A. N. Mal'tsev).

<sup>6</sup> Hermann Weidhaas, op. cit. (see note 12 of preceding chapter), traces the planning of this type of church (*Ovalraum mit Kuppel und Doppeltürme*) since the Renaissance and follows up how it was adopted in different countries: Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Poland and Lithuania. By citing numerous examples—a list which he hopes will be supplemented by his readers—he shows that it appears to meet the predilections of the nobility and that this cannot only have been by chance ('Er bleibt Gegenstand der Vorliebe des reichen Hochadels der habsburgischen und polonischen Länder, und diese Vorliebe ist nicht wallos und zufällig', p. 120). When he compares the Polish churches of the Piaristines with that in Kremsier (Kroměříž, in Moravia) he admits that the Piaristines no more adopted an exclusive plan for their churches than did the Jesuits, but points out that they nevertheless favoured this one, no doubt under the influence of the magnates who were their patrons. His analysis of the social psychology of the nobility, earnest as it may be, may call forth reservations. Is it, for instance, quite certain that Polish aristocrats favoured a Borrominesque style because of the praiseworthy fact that they had a guilty conscience predisposing them to welcome an 'anguished' style? ('Sie brauchten darum einen Stil wie den borrominesken Barock, denn dieser ist ein Stil der Angst', p. 133.)

There is no doubt that Borromini was consumed by anxiety (vide supra), but it has by no means been proved that his style betrays this personal worry and that it does not, in its delicate grace and decoration, evoke a quite different impression. But this is not the right place to begin a discussion of an essay whose chief merit seems to be in stressing the relationship of an artistic style and its background and to point out lines for research that will certainly be fruitful.

<sup>7</sup> P. Pascal, *Avvakum et les débuts du raskol, la crise religieuse au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle en Russie* (1938).

<sup>8</sup> In Russian monasteries, which comprise more chapels and buildings than those found in Latin monasteries, there is usually a chapel above the main entrance. The Russians do not, as we do, distinguish a church from a chapel on account of size, but whichever sanctuary is used for the celebration of Mass is called a church (*tserkov*). The word for chapel (*tchasoviia*) is only used for an oratory or where one only recites the Hours. It is due to this that, in many monasteries and convents, there is a church (*Trapeznaia tserkov*).

<sup>9</sup> For all Russian art, one should consult the works of Louis Réau: *L'art russe des origines à Pierre le Grand* (Paris, 1920). *L'art russe* in the collection Arts, Styles and Techniques (Larousse).

M. V. Alpatov, *Všeobščaiia istoriia iskusstv* (General history of Art), Volume III (Moscow, 1955). The interpretation of Narychkin Baroque (pp. 317 et seq) is particularly penetrating.

For this chapter I have made great use of the Russian work *Rousskoïe zodchestvo* (Russian Architecture), Volume III; *Pamiatniki architektury XVII<sup>e</sup> vëka* (Monuments of Russian architecture in the Seventeenth Century) (Moscow, 1953), with an introduction by A. G. Tchiniakov.

A. G. Tchiniakov is also the author of the excellent chapter on seventeenth-century architecture in the work entitled *Otcherki istorii CCCP, Period feodalizma XVII<sup>e</sup> vëka* (Outline of Russian History, the feudal period: the seventeenth century) (Moscow, 1955).

<sup>10</sup> Thus the outstanding art critic, M. A. Il'in, in the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* (*Bol'shaia sovietskaia encyclopediia*). One can follow his argument well enough without accepting his conclusion. 'Art at the end of the seventeenth century shows close links with the art of ancient Russia, from which



it evolved. It is inseparable from it. That appears to me to be quite certain. But then it is wrong to define it as Baroque. Baroque is the art which we find in Russia at the beginning of the eighteenth century until round about 1760.<sup>1</sup> I do not share this opinion. At the end of the seventeenth century there was an abundance of Renaissance elements in Russian architecture and in its decoration, and these elements were interpreted, by artists whose names we rarely know, in a markedly Baroque manner. It was a period of authentic Russian Baroque. Doubtless it was able to pave the way to success for the later style of Baroque introduced by Rastrelli.

<sup>11</sup> L. Hauteceur, *op. cit.*, Volume II<sup>2</sup>, pp. 809 and 815.

<sup>12</sup> To justify this argument it would be necessary to undertake a broad review (which is impossible here) of the political, economic and social state of Russia both before and after Peter the Great.

The idea that art at the time of Peter the Great represents a progress linked up with what preceded it because it was connected with an inevitable and progressive social development has been advanced by the Russian professor, F. Nedochivine, in a work called *Otcherki teorii iskusstva* (Outline of a Theory of Art), which is inspired by Marxist ideology.

A study of the evolution of iconical art in the seventeenth century before Peter the Great has been omitted here. One would come up against most interesting problems. Western influence could be traced (in the treatment of the human figure, for example, or the sense of movement, etc), but the icon remains a very specialized study. Architecture shows many more obvious traces of an affinity with the Baroque that catch our notice.

## CHAPTER XII

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Louis Gillet in A. Michel, *Histoire de l'art*, VIII<sup>2</sup>, p. 1032.

<sup>2</sup> The appearance of the neo-classical style in Brazil, which interrupted the phase of Borrominesque and Rococo taste, but did not spell its doom, can be explained by the change of taste in Portugal, or by the demand, once the colony had been taken over by the monarchy, for foreign artists.

<sup>3</sup> Like the little chapel of Anchieta in Niteroi, near Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>4</sup> *Coro* is the name given to a lofty hall in many monasteries, situated under the nath-

rex. Here the monks congregated for the Minor Offices.

<sup>5</sup> Louis Gillet, *op. cit.*, pp. 1039 et seq.

<sup>6</sup> Juan Contreras de Lozoya, *El barroco en el nuevo mundo, Retorica Barocca*, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup> M. Pál Kelemen published a fine book, *Baroque and Rococo in Latin America* (Macmillan, New York, 1951), which bridges a gap, gives us a most valuable round-up, and will remain an indispensable basis for any future work. The two phases which we refer to do not necessarily succeed one another. When native artists were engaged in decorating the churches it did not mean that designs from Europe were no longer in demand.

<sup>8</sup> Manuel Toussaint. Preface to the album *Imagineria colonial—Escultura colonial in Mexico* (Universidad Nacional autonoma de Mexico, Mexico, 1941).

<sup>9</sup> Photograph in Pál Kelemen, *op. cit.*, picture 105c.

<sup>10</sup> Differing views about this mid-seventeenth-century work are those of Manuel Toussaint, *San Diego de Alcala*, *op. cit.*, fig 4; Pál Kelemen, *San Pedro de Alcantara*, *op. cit.*, p. 112 and Planche 575.

<sup>11</sup> Manuel Toussaint, *op. cit.*, fig 9.

<sup>12</sup> Edgard de Cerqueira Falcão, *Relíquias da Bahia*, 1940, p. 107; the old college of the Jesuits; p. 190: the church of the Third Order of the Franciscans.

<sup>13</sup> For the Portuguese *talha* in Brazil, see the important chapters in the work by Germain Bazin, *L'architecture religieuse baroque au Brésil*, Book IV, especially pp. 252-96.

On the churches in Rio de Janeiro, besides the work by Paulo F. Santos, *O barroco e Jesuítico no Arquitetura do Brasil*, there is that of Ludwig Waagen, *Rio de Janeiro als Kunststadt* (1940).

<sup>14</sup> The Jesuit church at Belem, where the façade ends up in a magnificent flourish of two joined volutes, is placed under the protection of St Alexander.

<sup>15</sup> Edgard de Cerqueira Falcão, *op. cit.*, p. 60. This is a clumsy piece of work, but touching in its naivety. It is a theme often found in Baroque iconography—the Child Jesus playing with the instruments of the Passion.

<sup>16</sup> There is a nice study by Manuel Bandeira, *Ouro Preto*, which has been translated into French by Marcel Simon. It shows an intelligent sympathy for the art of Minas Geraes, but his archaeological notes docilely follow the traditional interpretations which have now to be revised.

<sup>17</sup> Germain Bazin, *op. cit.*, resolutely backs up the attribution of the church of São Francisco de Assis to Aleijadinho, and (pp. 194 et seq) furnishes a brilliant and accurate description of the building. However he rejects the theses advanced by José Mariano Filho in *Antonio Francisco Lisboa, o Aleijadinho* (Rio, 1944), though he recognizes that this is the only serious monograph published about the artist. But he condemns it as being bogged down in subjectivity. The arguments of José Mariano Filho, which were exposed after the debates were published in the review *Estudos Brasileiros* (2nd year, Volume 4, No 10, January-February 1940), seem to me to be convincing enough. They may be expounded with a certain amount of passion, for this is characteristic of the national temperament, but his critical reasoning carries authority. Mariano Filho recognizes the Borrominesque character of the churches of Minas Geraes and his supposition that plans for them had been sent from Portugal is most probable. He is inclined to give 1750 as the date of construction of São Francisco and brings up the question, without answering it, of whether the Rosario preceded it. But these are only speculations. On the other hand he puts forward a much more weighty argument by pointing out that we know of no architectural work by Aleijadinho before São Francisco de Assis and asking how he could suddenly begin with a work of this magnitude. It is a knotty problem, especially if one admits, with Germain Bazin himself (p. 189) that, firstly, the plans for the church have disappeared—in 1910 they were studied by

Furtado de Menezes, who saw the signature of Aleijadinho; secondly, that this attribution of the plans is attested to by Bretas (1815)—even though he showed more goodwill than critical authority—but against this there is ‘the strange silence of Joaquim José da Silva, who was usually so well informed’. Joaquim da Silva, a councillor (*vereador*) of Mariana, compiled about 1760 a chronicle of notable facts which is a treasured source, but not so much so that one can rely on it unquestionably. In an extract which Germain Bazin quotes in an appendix (p. 349), one finds this assertion: ‘e nas igrejas de São Pedro dos Clerigos e Rosario de Ouro Preto, delineadas par António Perreira de Souza Calheiro ao gosto da rotunda da Roma’. What does he call the Rotunda of Rome? It would be the Pantheon. But the Rosario, a Borrominesque church, has nothing in common with that.

<sup>18</sup> José Mariano Filho is inclined to believe that the Rosario is the more ancient and in some ways the prototype of the Borrominesque churches of Brazil. But the question remains obscure. (*Estudos brasileiros* II, *op. cit.*, p. 302.)

<sup>19</sup> For example, the church of São Francisco da Paula at Rio de Janeiro, with a traditional ground-plan and a tendency towards churrigueresque decoration, which dates from 1759, and to a lesser degree, because of its transitional features, Santa Cruz dos Militares (1770) and São José, which carries on till the time of Pedro II (1842) at least some aspects of the Baroque tradition.

<sup>20</sup> Reynaldo dos Santos, *op. cit.*



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# Bibliography

IN order not to repeat references to sources mentioned in the notes, only the most important works and those which have been most frequently consulted will be listed below.

A full bibliography for Baroque in general up to 1944 is given in Chapter VI of Volume II, *Moyen Age et temps modernes*, of *L'Histoire de l'art* by Pierre Lavedan, Collection Clio. A bibliography for Italian art is given in *L'art italien*, Volume II by André Chastel, Larousse, 1956.

## I. WORKS CONCERNING PROBLEMS OF ART AND CIVILIZATION IN GENERAL

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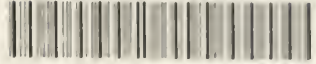


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